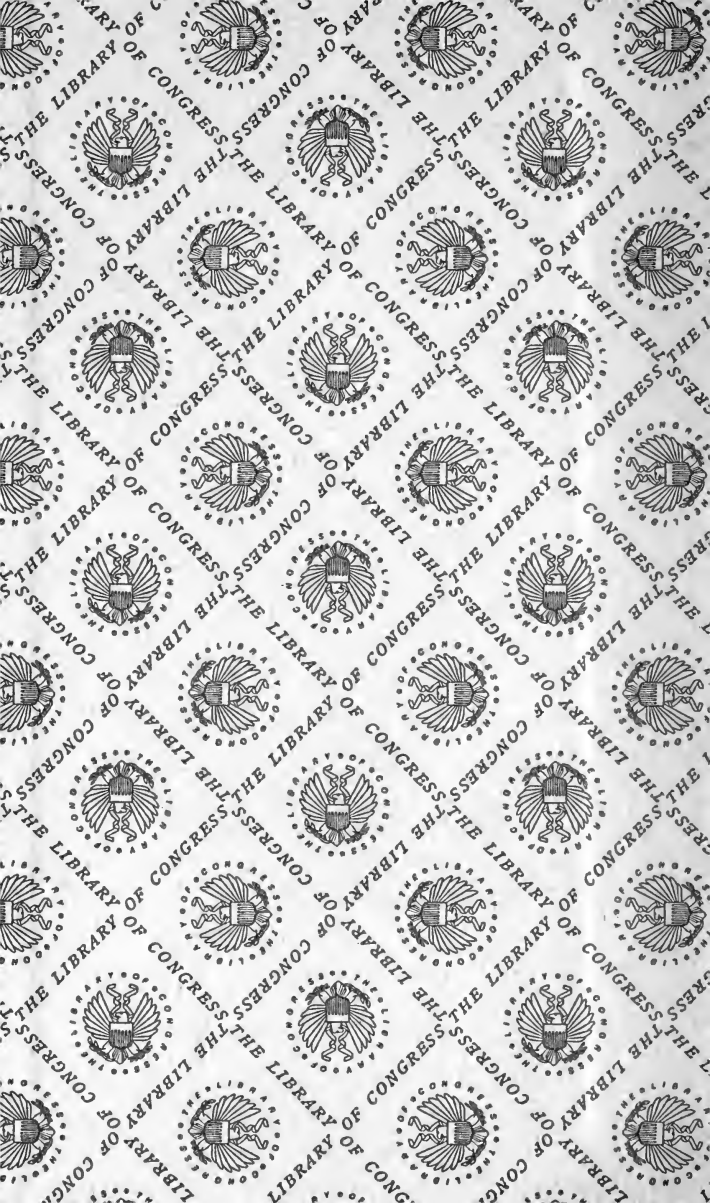
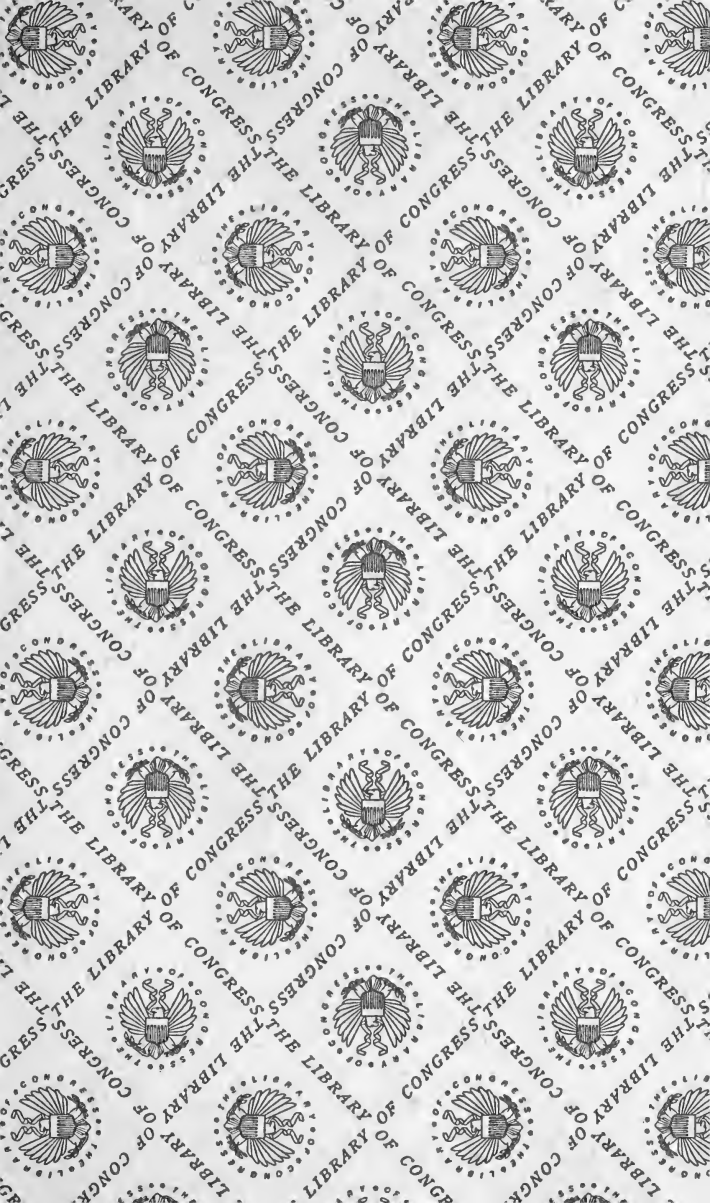


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AFTERNOONS

BY

MRS. JULIA F. SNOW

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DEDICATED TO
MY PLEASANT NEIGHBORS OF
ROSE HILL

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BUFFALO, N. Y.

1910

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INTRODUCTION

THESE little essays and talks are really the crystallization of the opinions, observations, and experiences of many years of a rather busy life—awaiting a convenient season for expression. Some have been printed before, and most of them were written during a delightful summer spent in most pleasant environment at Rose Hill, Canada.

So much of the book was the result of the veranda life of that summer that I have dedicated it to my charming neighbors of Rose Hill.

THE AVERAGE PERSON, OR A PLEA FOR MEDIOCRITY

IF there were not so many of us, we must be above or below the average. But as it is, we really need a kind word of encouragement.

Mediocrity does not mean uniformity, nor does it mean inferiority. It is a snug and comfortable region of achievement, rather than of stern effort or aspiration.

Emerson foolishly suggests as a help toward aspiration that we "hitch our wagon to a star"; but just think for a moment of the feelings of the star! Supposing you were a star; how would you like to have a clumsy earthly wagon lumping and lumbering after you through space, and fancy the condition of its load, strewn through the atmosphere and smashing on the earth below!

But if you are an average person, and have the luck to possess a wagon, try to keep on terra firma, observe the rules of the road, and get your load to its destination safely and in good condition, without attempting aerial flights of any sort.

Mediocrity does not mean inferiority, for while there are so many of us not quite as good as the others, some are really much better, and, in spite of the "rules of the Union," do excellent work. The odd part of it is, that the average persons seldom realize the special thing in which they are best, and often aspire to be credited with work in which they are really inferior. It is not only poor earth-born souls, altogether, who make this mistake. Who ever reads the

prose works of Milton, who esteemed them above "Paradise Lost"? And Bunyan thought much more of his dull, limping verses than that glorious lamp of Christendom, the "Pilgrim's Progress." Some who can cook delightfully aspire to music or painting, of which they make a doleful failure. Some one who can sew beautifully aspires to be a nurse, or a born nurse insists on writing poor stories. And a snug, comfortable darling of a girl, with whom you delight to spend an evening, has burning aspirations for social distinction, and longs for a "salon" of her own.

And so it goes.

One of the proverbial fallacies is, that "whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well," and "whatever one does at all should be done with all one's might and strength," etc. Not exactly so, for a light hand, a dexterous touch, a gift of discrimination and execution (often of omission) is often better for some things than the whole soul's tasking. A good many things can be left out altogether and the world will not suffer. I saw one of these over-conscientious women hemming dish-towels with a French hem, and a friend of mine says that she omits to ask her friends to a cup of tea because she feels that before doing it she ought to clean the attic thoroughly. (N. B.—She has since learned better.)

But the average person generally has a house clean and comfortable, and ready for a friend's visit in a spare hour, and the average meal is good, clean, comfortable, and paid for. The average person is quite capable of most things that need to be done. He pays his bills and sends his children to school, clean, well equipped, and

well clothed. He treats his family well and usually goes to church, and, in general, follows the Golden Rule of neighborliness. He has a great dislike for debt, although the "woes of life o'ertake him," sometimes, and debts, as well as other trials, may be his. He does not expect or strive to be president, although he holds small but important offices (in fact, he must to be an Average Person). He votes regularly on election day, and knows why he prefers this or that candidate. He sleeps well at night, although he does not object to taking his turn with a sick child, or even a sick neighbor. He enjoys his meals, sometimes relishes onions, but from pure neighborliness refrains before going into company. He neither expects nor longs to be Paderewski, but he relishes the music of the Sængerbunds and delights in the Park concerts, and loves the music of the schools which his children attend. He has no wish to be a great artist, but likes to go to the art galleries on a holiday once in a while. If he has pictures, they are good of their sort. There is a choice, even in chromos. But the Average Person generally chooses good photographs for his walls. And it is much better to know a little music and art than none at all, and the taste grows and improves with indulgence.

Some of them are dishonest and steal the money which they count or collect or receive. But the Average Man *is* honest, "or the State totters." Society cannot exist unless most of the people are honest and pay debts.

The Average Man is fairly ambitious; would like to be a little richer, and looks forward to better days and more holidays; but, like Governor B— of the Bigelow papers, "He stays to

his hum and looks arter his folks," till he can take some of them with him for holidays.

He is seldom led astray by the charms of an opera dancer, and the microbe of divorce passes him by. Nor does his wife stray from the path of virtue. She knows John better than even the Recording Angel, faults and all. But woe to any one who suggests that he has any faults!

She seldom eats onions, but will cook them, uncomplainingly, for him. And has love a stronger test?

What would the Republic be without the Average Man, who votes and is patient (often too much so), and his wife, who is his helpmate?

We love the Average Man. We live with him and insist that he is far above the great average, as, indeed, he is certain to be in one, two, or three things. There is some one place in which he is indispensable, and whose wheels refuse to go 'round properly if he is ill or disabled. He is the pillar of the church, maybe, and, although his subscriptions are moderate, they are faithfully paid.

No one else keeps a better set of books and he is not afraid of the bank expert. But although he is perfectly competent in his bookkeeping, and is perfectly willing to help his little boy in his arithmetic lesson, he cannot do it, for nowadays it is all "figure work" and "they do not teach us that way in *our* school." Still he is a help in all untechnical ways, and likes to go a-fishing with the boy, and make him willow whistles.

The Average Person does all work fairly well, in all that is important. I am speaking of the Average American, although he may be a native of some other country, being an American.

He is never an anarchist, and he is an active partisan of good roads, whether he rides a bicycle, wagon, carriage, buggy, or motor car. As yet he is only interested in air-carriages as an interesting show. He is a good family man. ("A good provider," it used to be called before women did the marketing.) A good customer, a good salesman (and, when he has a chance to be, all prefer him to the shop-girl behind the counter). A good, helpful, but unobtrusive neighbor. We can trust him, we love him, and his wife too. His heart is right and his brain clear. Sometimes he is slangy, and his English phenomenal, but the speech is sensible and friendly and the meaning unmistakable.

We found out many of these things years ago, when secession was at work and the Union trembled. The Average Man who would "not stand any such nonsense." The army was organized and he did it, and fought and suffered in it. The Average Woman helped him in all ways. She took care of the children while he was gone (and often he did not come back); organized and worked in hospitals; and out of it all came organized hospitals and trained nursing. The Republic was saved and the Average Man and Woman did it, and the average was higher ever after.

The Geniuses are few, but powerful; the Average Person numerous and, in the long run, reliable, and even if the State totters, it is not to its fall.

The Genius is master of all the days and hours, the devisor, maybe the waster, of revenues and resources. Everything stands aside for him. He may succeed — and when he does, oh! the beauty and the glory of it all! And he is immortal. That is his reward.

But thank God for the Average Person! It is sad to wander through the world and see the waste of average material in the vain effort to achieve great things. But a little music is better than none; a little drawing is a great help; a fair skill with a needle is better than poor pictures; a loving and faithful hand in one's own family and among needy neighbors than irrational zeal in alien and foreign work. A wise justice in dealing with one's family and friends than public orations (badly given), and platform issues, not too well managed.

Let us be glad of the Average Person, who knows not Chopin or Greig, but who willingly plays for the young people's dancing; who doesn't try to paint, but can make shadow pictures on the wall, which make the young ones scream with delight; who is smiling, not seductive; comfortable, not dramatic nor destructive; merry without levity, religious without cant, and patriotic without fanaticism.

The Average Person does not expect a monument to him. He does his work well,—better,—best—loving, helping, caring for all, bearing his pain with patience, his life with a smile, and with kindly smiles and the daily joy of living for his reward, and his monument is the respect of his acquaintances, the love of his friends, and the tender tears of love from his beloved, when he leaves us for the better world whose average is one of eternal happiness and progress.

SUBDIVISIONS OF SOCIETY

OF these there are many, and in the order of their importance to the world at large they follow each other something in this order:

RELATIVES,	ASSOCIATES,
LOVERS,	DUTIES,
FRIENDS,	HABITS,
ACQUAINTANCES,	NEIGHBORS.

RELATIVES

They are of various degrees and countless in numbers.

In order to exist at all, a pair of a more or less well-selected parents is absolutely essential. They continue to be of more or less importance through life. They are the direct source of our existence and one's later advantage. One cannot do without a Father and Mother to begin with. Everybody has them, but has no choice in their selection.

After them, the degree of relationship and number of relatives vary so much that one cannot classify, with any accuracy, degrees of importance, morally, socially, financially, or otherwise. There is the greatest choice in them, but you have no privilege of selection. There are relatives by blood and by law. Some of them are very nice, almost as nice as one's self. And others — well —

They are a wise provision of Providence to prevent the growth of conceit within the family circle, and, although sometimes they are very proud of one, they seldom mention it to the

person most interested. Some do not think it is good taste to do so. You had better not attempt any frivolous pleasantry with a relative. The sense of humor in the direction of law or consanguinity is limited, and the perspective seems wrong for that sort of thing. That is the real trouble with relatives, a wrong perspective.

A serious view is much more successful. I have nothing to say against relatives. I have been a relative myself of several sorts all my life.

As for Lovers, they are really the most interesting of all the subdivisions, even with regard to outsiders. To themselves and each other they are all absorbed and absorbing. In their intercourse with others, they are indifferent and perfunctory and appeal to others from a sentimental or spectacular point of view. You cannot talk with them, and they are oblivious to the simplest form of family or social life. They only discover how much so they are when, after years of married life, their own young people treat them in the same way, and they recall past years with a certain humiliation.

Everybody is a good deal tired, bored, and bothered with them, but, remembering that the condition is but temporary, universal, and almost inevitable, bear it all with loving patience until the transformation is complete and the pretty pair of butterflies float off into the summer atmosphere. (This is a figure of speech; it is often very different.) Lovers think that it is nobody's business but their own, and are quite indifferent to all outside opinions, of all outside spectators. This view constitutes the chronic mistake of lovers, for a good, happy, successful marriage is a matter of rejoicing in a whole

community, and an ill-mated, mistaken marriage is a public calamity, whose possible consequences shadow the future for years and for ages to come. However, no one can exactly foretell, and it may be better than seems possible at first, for nature is strong and has a good deal to say about results.

Respecting Friends, there is much to say. The world has a loose way of talking about friends when they mean only familiar acquaintances, greatly misleading one to confuse all sorts of associates with the holy relation of Friend.

For there is a holy Friendship. Moses was the Friend of God, and Christ enjoyed the closest and most intimate and affectionate friendships. "A friend is made for adversity." "There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

But with earthly friendships there is a great difference in friends. He is more than kin and more than kind, *and he may change*. Adversity is not a crucial test. The world is not as meanly affected by adversity as is supposed. Strangers are often kinder in adversity than friends. It is a simple Christian duty to show kindness to the afflicted, who may be strangers themselves with no claim to friendship, and the withdrawal of association with those in adversity may be a mere matter of leisure, or the want of it. Friendship implies equality, sympathy, and a certain amount of similarity of tastes, habits, and acquisitions. One wishes to share pleasures and benefits with friends, and does not wait until the crape is on the door to show its love and sympathy. One feels like this in real friendship.

"How John would enjoy this trip! Can't we get him to join us?"

"Tom likes this kind of music. We must get him to go with us next time Josefy plays."

"The H.'s are just the kind of people that Ned likes. Let us invite him with them to dinner."

And so a life-long good will, delightful evenings, and all sorts of pleasant opportunities multiply themselves from this kind of friendship.

Friends need not confide in each other, although they can if they will. They need not always explain themselves, for they trust each other too much to need to do so. (It would often be better if they did, however.)

They need not even talk. Friendly silence is the best thing of all. They are happy together, but friendship can bear the test of absence.

If sorrow comes, they will not be far apart, but it need not be their introduction as they come together with outstretched hands, moist eyes, and silent speech.

This is the real kind. And I have noticed that it thrives in outdoor life, with walks, drives, rides, or even a quiet hour on the veranda or "under the greenwood tree"—a good, wholesome sort, too.

There is a curious phase of friendship not altogether spurious, but odd. Some do not believe in its existence, but it does exist. They are *such* good friends that they are sure you will not mind any sort of treatment, any sort of commission or omission. They slight the ones that they really love best, in favor of all sorts of more or less desirable acquaintances who do not care a rap whether they are included or excluded, while the shut-out friend really does care and suffers, although he pretends not to.

The real secret of friendship is the feeling of

companionship, of being needed by each other. It is not necessary to have *illusions* of perfection in friends. But it needs lots of patience, love, and loyalty to endure and often ignore the hard, literal fact of faults and defects in each other, whether of temper, temperament, or even of temperature, for ventilation is a point which has parted the best of friends, and is of far more importance to the permanence and enjoyment of friendship than a difference in beliefs in religion, politics, or even of social caste.

Nothing can ever make up for a lost friend. You must lose parents and relatives. You may lose husband or wife, and, in part, the loss be restored or made up to you, and sometimes more and better than before. But each friend is unique, and the loss leaves a permanent void and scar.

That is one reason why Acquaintances are so very important. There can be so many. There are so many of them; hundreds, perhaps even more. They present every variety of human character; good, bad, dull, spicy, restful, quiet, stimulating — all sorts.

Provided that one has the usual stock of good manners and good temper, one can enjoy almost any or all of them by turns; and if for any reason you do not enjoy certain of them, beyond the decencies of life, you need not trouble them much, or they you, for always there are others.

There are wonderful possibilities in every acquaintance, the more utterly charming because not fully tested, for at any time they may become anything, everything, or nothing — to you.

There is, so to speak, a limited demand for lovers (one at a time is usually sufficient) and friends, a small circle, because of the exquisite

delicacy of the position and the relation. But your acquaintance really demands little, and permits everything in the sunshine of congenial opportunity. In that, they may become "friends, countrymen, and lovers," at any time and become as necessary to life as relatives, tender as lovers, and loyal as friends, and they can be transformed into any and all of these. But they do not insist upon it, although the conditions may be life-long, and what is more sweet and tender than "mine auld acquaintance," which is always so pleasantly "brought to mind?"

This variety is often found most pleasantly established among one's Associates.

This species is found everywhere, although seldom of our own selection, and under all circumstances, and even in our household help, our church, our club, our charity boards, committees, societies, and assistants of all sorts. Those whom we meet daily on trains, cars, in hospitals, offices, banks — everywhere.

No one ever knows their fellow-beings as well as your Associates, in these ways, know each other. There are no delicate concealments, no private weaknesses, no sheltered deficiencies. All is open to the fierce white light that beats into the office or committee room. But you rather like it. It is no worse for you than for the others. You all take your turn, and if faults show, so do the better qualities, and you know just how, when, and where to take each other, and you work together to the best advantage. This is true of charitable and club work, the arrangements of entertainments, as well as keeping house, entertaining guests, or running a great business house of any kind.

Then, there are also Dependents — both vol-

untary and involuntary. "Some to which one is born, some achieved, and some thrust upon one," all requiring your utmost tact and delicacy in their treatment. And they may belong to any or all of the classes mentioned before, or they may be simply derelicts, bereft of sailing or steering gear, heavily loaded, too light to sink, too heavy to float, deserted, water-logged. Can you tow them in? Can you lighten them? Or must you avoid and desert them for self and family preservation? Of these, each one is a lesson in wisdom, tact, kindness, or justice and sternness, too, if need be.

The most inscrutable of all are our Habits. You cannot always remember when you acquired them or how. They may be any of the others, but all faded out and only the habit remaining. You see them about so often, and neither you nor they care much about it. You cannot do much for each other, nor are you fond of each other. Sometimes the intercourse is irksome, sometimes disagreeable, and you vow you will never go there again.

But you do! That is what makes it a habit. And when the Inevitable happens, and the Releaser from Trials and the Destroyer of Delight takes them away, and the Habit is broken, you cannot understand the feeling of loss and loneliness which comes to you. There was, perhaps, no real reason why the Habit was formed in the beginning, but for that very reason it is hard to have it broken.

The Duty is sometimes like the Habit, but there is a real reason for it, and a definite reason is a great help. Besides, Duty may be completed and ended, may be only temporary, and that gives a brisk vitality to the matter while it

lasts, and a clear, vigorous satisfaction when ended.

But best and sweetest of all our elective associations is the heaven-sanctioned one, "Our Neighbor." Half of the Tables of our Lord are given to regulating our treatment of Him. Christ's own Commandment enjoins our love of Him, and the holiest of rewards come to those who love Him as they love themselves, their own exquisite Ego — our involuntary Ideal.

They may live next door to you, or not, and often they do so. But such close proximity is not really needed and cannot be, because there are so many of them. Proximity certainly does *not* do it, for such are often farther off than neighbors across the seas.

But the real neighbor who is never in the way and never out of the way, with whom you share your privileges and your helps, does not take coarse liberties with your house, room, or garden, or walk into the house uninvited and through private entrances, and reveal private matters thus accidentally made known, or appropriate books and goods unasked. This last is not the kind of neighbor whom I mean. But the one who knows when you are alone and lonely, and drops in, or alone and tired, and stays away, is your real neighbor. You withhold nothing from each other, and you do not forget your benefits, but return them in season, and you are ready with open hand, even at some personal inconvenience. They do not intrude into your secrets. You have a great sorrow — a trial — even disgrace. They know it, or suspect it, but they do not touch your wound. They will pour in oil and wine, but will not probe it. Perhaps all your neighbors know it, but they keep a golden

silence toward you and each other. The tragedies of a quiet neighborhood are known and pitied, but not talked over. To a real Neighbor you can talk or be silent. You can try a little pleasantry or even talk nonsense. A wise silence seals the lips to the trials of others. From such neighbors nothing is withheld but blame and harsh criticism. One may go to heaven because one loves one's neighbors. But one really deserves little credit when one loves such neighbors. It is so easy, so pleasant, so joyous to live near them, that it is already almost heaven, as if the Pearly Gates stood wide open and the Golden Streets were daily trodden by our beloved Neighbors.

“A CITIZEN OF NO MEAN CITY”

SO said and claimed St. Paul. But Tarsus is forgotten, except for its glorious citizen, whose fame has filled the whole world. It is the citizen who ennobles the city, and not the city — the dwellers within its bounds.

What is citizenship? And what are its rights and duties?

At the time of the New Year municipalities change officers. New lords and new laws take their places and oaths are sworn to support the charters, constitutions, and by-laws, etc. The average good citizen makes more or less numerous good resolutions, to be more or less well kept.

Citizenship grows constantly more and more complicated. Good citizenship has many more obligations than to vote regularly and to keep out of jail. In fact, voting is not so much a duty as a restricted privilege, neither possessed nor deserved by all residents, and is quite aside from the more essential functions of good citizenship.

The privileges of good citizenship include orderly conduct, neighborly behavior, the protection of the police and fire department, public lights, care and improvement of streets, roads, and highways, drainage, rights of way, and rules of the road. All of these, and more, are the blessed rights of citizens, and constantly help to make life better worth having and living. And each resident man, woman, child (and even animals), have duties as well as privileges, which, when performed, make the city the dear and well-beloved possession of its citizens.

The French Revolution abolished every title, every distinction, and most possessions, but it dared not take away the title of "Citizen." That survived even the Terror.

Every accomplishment, every gift and grace, every well-performed duty, every kindly and pleasant act, and the beauty, taste, good breeding, and hospitality of "all who dwell below the skies" is a most valuable asset, and adds immeasurably to the value and importance of every town and village. When it is said of that town, "Blankville is such a delightful town; such charming people! such hospitable and kindly families reside there! They make their homes so pleasant to strangers and *even to their neighbors!*"

When these things are said, who can reckon how much this kindly verdict adds to the civil, even the commercial, value of Blankville!

Concord (Mass.) is a rather pretty, not very important, New England village, and there are many such. But Concord shines forever in the glory of Emerson, Hawthorne, Lowell, the Alcotts, and the other illuminatii of that period.

It is not fair to compare the greatness and glory of Roman citizenship with ours of this period. Rome was built for its citizens, not by them, and its glory pertains to its Rulers, the conquerors of the whole known world, who built their cities and (not inviting immigration) graciously conferred their privileges upon the subjects — soldiers and slaves — who, being *compelled* to reside within their limits, received the boon of Roman citizenship.

But we are not Rome. We have created our own cities, built them of such material as lay at hand, and made them fit habitations for men

and their families, and, in spite of defects and undevelopment, improved them from time to time and made the name of "American citizen" respected the world over. But the citizens came first, and the city later, to receive its image and superscription, its value and estimation from the qualities of the men and women who built it.

For every man, woman, and child (even every animal permitted within its boundaries) belongs to the commonwealth of that borough. Every well-built house, every well-kept lawn or garden, every conveniently planned home, every grand old tree, every strong and thrifty young tree adds its value. Even the green triangle at the cross streets, with its clump of shrubbery and maybe its fountain or wayside seat, multiplies the treasures of memory in recalling the charms and attraction of the place. How much more the character or attainment of its favored residents!

Residents? That is the word. It is well to go to and fro in the earth that health may be benefited and knowledge be increased, and to share in the "give and take" of the world's goods. But long absences not only detract from the value of the citizenship, but detach the citizen from the city, and interest and affection both suffer.

When a handsome new house is built, finished and furnished, and the eyes of friendly regard are fixed upon it, and the desire of all hearts is moved toward it, then the owners pick up and pack up and start off for long journeys and absences over the earth perhaps for a year, maybe more. This is great fun, maybe, but poor citizenship. Such a house, when deserted, is most desolate, and positively impairs the uses

and dignity of the town. Compare this period of absence with the owner's return! The rooms are lighted, the supply carts make their daily visits, horses, carriages, and motors go about the streets, and the young folks stroll about the lawns and gardens. The income of the owner and resident is spent in the town for improvements, labor, and supplies, and in worship, charities, education, hospitality, and comfort. The good results from even one well-conditioned family spending its income within the limits of the town itself may make a vast difference in the well-being of its other residents.

All the world knows the effect of absenteeism upon Ireland, whose soil-won money is drained off into the hands of strangers and their lands and homes are left unto them desolate. Ireland's misery is largely owing to century-long course of "absent treatment."

The simple presence of good, wise, cultivated, and interested citizens, who live and work for the benefit of their own town, is of incalculable benefit to all of its other citizens.

It is this principle which is recognized in the value of the "College Settlement" work. Now, why not try real settlement work among one's reputable and even respectable neighbors?

When all the children go to one school, that school is apt to be good. And so with the churches, libraries, lyceums, and all other means of education. The elegant manners and deportment of a *real* lady will affect the culture of a generation of younger folks. But it cannot be wholly so if the stately mansion is always closed and abandoned "in the sweet o' the year" for seashore, sea voyage, the mountains, and the palm grove. A pleasant fireside or a veranda,

“now and then, is relished by the best of men,” perhaps the worst.

Hospitality is most beautiful and most important and most enjoyable. But the feeling that you have the privilege of a frequent hour with a *real* neighbor is worth many receptions, delightful as they may be.

THE EXPRESSIONS OF HOUSES

AS I passed through the streets of a great city it seemed to me, being a stranger, as if there was a message to me in the outsides of all the houses by which I passed. The houses were most of them old, antedating by many years their present occupants. There was often a cruel uniformity in their street fronts, but that in itself was a message. Could it be that the senseless bricks and mortar and stones were informed with intelligence, and yearned to communicate with my spirit? Although no hospitable door was opened to me, the message grew plainer and plainer at every step.

I am speaking now of houses. Homes will come hereafter. Nor do we discuss the evolution of architecture, from the cave-dwellers to huts,—to tents,—to pyramids; from Egyptian and even older art to Greek,—to Roman,—to Gothic; from the Renaissance to the Mixed Modern, or every-man-his-own-builder (for of architecture there is none),—each had its lesson—its message.

The long, uniform, continuous rows and blocks of houses, so common in large and old cities, are a grievous necessity of their crowded condition. Economy, of space, of walls, and materials, of light, paving, and drainage forces the rule upon land owners and builders. These buildings are dwellings, not houses. They may be homes, for the blessed principles of family life are not confined to any style of domicile. But long rows of houses, like those in Philadel-

phia (so like each other that even their tenants sometimes mistake their neighbors' houses for their own), convey to the mind an impression of a sort of communism, while it is at the same time a complete separation. It is a weariness to the spirit and a fatigue to the flesh, "grinding men's souls to a pale unanimity." This is the message and expression of long, uniform blocks of dwellings. Sometimes, of course, they do acquire an individual quality.

I remember once, in Philadelphia, having occasion to pass through a certain street for several days in succession and at the same hour. The parlor blinds were open and the sunshine streamed in. On the window ledge slept a large gray cat. Lying there asleep, she conveyed to me a distinct message that she was a privileged intruder, and that the people were gentle and kindly folks; that they were generous and hospitable, for the blinds stood open wide, and the cat was plump and well fed. They must have been careful to dust and keep clean that window seat, for a cat dislikes a dusty place (always excepting the coal-bin). They were sensible, for she had no ribbon on her neck. They trusted their neighbors, for she wore no collar and badge of ownership. I saw absolutely nothing of the interior, only a gray cat asleep in the window, but she plainly told me all this at a glance. After all, the city block is only a crude collection of dwellings.

Houses are different. A house has four or more walls to itself, roof, cellar, and separate individual entrance. It has its stairs to itself, that great problem in house architecture. Dante says, "There is no labor half so hard as going up and down another's stairs." You do not need

to see the people to understand the house. It speaks for itself.

"Every man's house is his castle," says John Bull. This was good and true in the days when a castle was the only safe dwelling for a man, and more especially for his family, and when defense was so important that nothing could be left unguarded. But private dwellings built in the style of castles in these days are anachronisms. The huge, heavy arches and narrow arrow-slit windows have only Apollo's arrows to keep out, and they ought to be welcomed, not excluded, in our day and climate. Rounded towers of solid masonry and fortress-like corners and entrances are as much out of place in our smiling and neighborly avenues as the brave old Ritter himself would be, booted and spurred, in our æsthetic drawing-rooms. The expression of the outside of such a house would be a challenge: "Come in if you dare! Your reception will be a hot one!"

The expression of that modern house, with its countless modifications, which, for want of a better name, we call Queen Anne, is very different. It says: "Come in by all means. Your welcome will be a warm and kindly one." It represents what in England is called the villa style, and permits the largest liberty of design and adaptation to one's purse (be the same more or less full) as well as to family or condition.

But English conditions of villa life are very different from ours. Theirs almost suppose a country, or, at least, a suburban location, and a certain seclusion very dear to an Englishman, but nearly impossible to Americans, and seldom desired, as may be seen hereafter. The family

are not of necessity known at all to their neighbors. They have many or few friends, but they are of their own selection. There is a high fence or a hedge or wall which protects the family seclusion, and one might live a lifetime so near as to touch, and so far as to scarcely know each other's names. It is their way, and they like it. As the Englishman said of his queen, "She is our whim. We pay for her, and it is nobody's business." Nor is it. But just now we are speaking of ourselves and about our ways, and we feel exactly as he felt.

There is a beautiful and beloved city in my mind's eye to-day, where all who pass through its miles of homes can enjoy the fair, green lawns stretching from doorway to pavement, with no intervening hedge or fence. If there is any, it is of lace-like wire, an invisible barrier to dogs. The little twirling sprinkler scatters its tiny rainbow over the grass, which is emerald velvet, unless it is buried in snow in winter. Almost every house has its veranda. Sometimes it nearly surrounds the house. Behind its shading vines, or gaily striped awning are pleasant faces, both young and old, in the summer days and evenings. There are chairs of all shapes, sometimes tables for books or work, sometimes hammocks, and sometimes steamer chairs, and the language of these houses is something like this:

"Come into this pleasant outdoor parlor! It is not because it is scant and uncomfortable indoors that we sit here, but here is sunshine and shade, and both coolness and warmth, and simple kindness toward neighbor and friend."

In that city, this life is so much a matter of course that no more comment is excited than

would be by ladies and gentlemen walking along the streets — nay, not so much. The expression of the whole street is that of candor and security, of sincerity and good will. No plot nor intrigue could exist in such open-air life — such frank domesticity. Distant far be the day when tramp or bully shall put to flight this sweet outdoor life, and send those fair faces, white with fear, to hide behind curtains, and to look out only upon fenced gardens.

Upon these green lawns one seldom finds flowers, but many flowering vines on the verandas. Flowers need seclusion and protection, while one shares but does not tempt in planting a flowering vine.

In America, as yet, there are few great country houses. Our cities and our dwellings have been our ancestral homes for only a few years. We do a great deal better. For one great titled (or otherwise distinguished) family, with an army of servants, and all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of hereditary country residence for hundreds of years, with not far away a shabby, tumble-down, fever-stricken village, we have in and about our fair city thousands of homes, each detached from its neighbor, and yet with the friendliest feeling toward its neighbor; each with a bit of individual grass or garden, and a roof and cellar, four walls and a veranda, all to itself. The city stretches miles away to the country, into which it melts imperceptibly, to give space for these homes and their environments. Many men have toiled hard, many women denied themselves much, to possess them. A flat may be a need and a convenience of a great city, but it can never be more than a substitute for an independent house.

The best expression of a house is: "We who dwell here are happy, clean, and good. We are happy and glad to be here." And sometimes this is added: "As we are happy here, as we are comfortable, clean, and good, we make you welcome to share these good things with us. Come in, and share with us. In fact, it is largely for you that we built it thus."

There are some modest little houses that say: "We have but little, but you are welcome. Even at some small inconvenience to ourselves, be welcome." But the worst that can be said is (alas! that it should ever be said): "We are here and we mean to stay. We like it well enough for ourselves, but if you have any business with us, get it over and go, for there is little room and no welcome for any but ourselves."

There are houses in our streets that, simply as houses, bear each of these messages in their outside brick and mortar, stone and wood, doors, windows, and garden walks. You feel it in every fiber before you have turned into the walk or put your hand on the door-bell. It does not depend upon elegance and cost or the lack of it.

There was a charming expression of hospitality and welcome, we are told, in the houses of the Southern planters — a free and easy cordiality and lavish generosity. That is of the past, and it is sufficient to say that the circumstances of those days made it easier to exercise a lavish hospitality than those of our own day. But we are speaking of houses — a Colonial house, new, but true. Now here is a *real* house. The kindly doors almost open of themselves, and in summer often do stand wide open. You cannot resist its

message of welcome. There is a wide square hall, a wide open grate or fireplace, and a great square staircase. If you go no farther, there is a gentle friendliness in that open fire, before which you pause for a moment. Those wide square turns of the staircase sweep upward with a wave of welcome. There are no hidden horrors of untidy bedrooms in the sweet seclusion of those fair chambers. There is warmth everywhere, light everywhere, fresh air everywhere. The windows are large and clear. Perhaps the draperies are cheap, but they are certainly clean. The chairs are of varied sizes and shapes, for all ages are welcome here. There is a friendly dæmon doing our bidding in the cellar, which creates a climate of gentle summer throughout the house. There is no longer the excuse for bad housekeeping that it was "too cold to stay upstairs long enough to be very particular." It is as easy to keep house in winter as in summer. The warm bath is always ready, and a house so well planned in all its details is not hard to care for. There is not always an attic, but the modern idea is that what one family does not need or wish to use, another family does, and that moths are no assistance to our ideas of veneration. In the ground floor there may be, and should be, sliding doors between the rooms, but the portieres secure space and ventilation. They may be beautiful and graceful, and they express candor and innocence, for who could be wicked or intriguing in rooms open as the day to the eyes and ears of all comers? It is a wonder that those who dwell in these lovely homes should ever be willing to leave them. They do leave them, but are very glad to get home again.

Fifty years ago it was very different. Homes are a very old-fashioned subject, and one may get a little prosy talking of them. A home at that time, within the meaning and the reach of average people of modest means, was a house of five or six rooms, of which the two front rooms in the front of the house—the parlor and front chamber, better furnished and appointed than any others in the house—were solemnly set apart and closed to all but infrequent, half-welcome, and wholly formal visitors. It cost a good deal to furnish these rooms. They were very neat, and were kept most scrupulously clean. At rare intervals a visitor was admitted to these dim glories. All parlors of that period had much in common, except, of course, the item of cost, which varied. They all had good carpets of bright and hopelessly permanent colors, a great square haircloth sofa, six mahogany and haircloth chairs exactly alike, one or two rocking chairs to match, a center table, sometimes marble topped, containing a lamp hung with cut-glass prisms and standing upon a worsted-worked mat, the proud achievement of the young lady of the family. There were also two or three very brightly bound annuals, and often a big and handsome family Bible. On the mantelpiece (very high, and often beautiful) stood lamps or girandoles with prisms, or two flower jars exactly alike, but never all of them. In a handsome parlor the windows were hung with heavy damask curtains over lace, over holland shades, over tightly-closed windows, with closed and outside green shutters.

This owl's paradise was slightly warmed by occasional opening of the door of communication with the back room, of which more anon.

Sometimes, if there were young people in the family, there was a stove, or a grate, or a fireplace, but more frequently in cold weather fire was disused altogether. There were always some pictures on the walls, sometimes portraits, oftener engravings of some solemn and instructive subject, often a death-bed scene of some excellent celebrity.

The plainer parlors often possessed ornaments of wax flowers, hair wreaths (*in memoriam*), framed needlework, and even a silver-plated coffin plate framed upon a black velvet background. It didn't make much difference, however, for it was quite too dark to see anything clearly, if Raphaels or Titians had hung upon the walls.

But somewhere in the house there was a room into which all that represented the daily life of the family was crowded. It was often in the basement, and served for dining-room, sitting-room, sewing-room, nursery, study, library. (Sometimes on a Monday night, after a rainy washing day, it filled a vacancy as a drying room.) Here sat grandmother with her snuff and her knitting, and grandfather with pipe and newspaper, and the sick child, and the busy mother; and here the children rushed in, glowing from school and snowballing. This room was not always well ventilated, seldom so, in fact; not always dry or wholesome or roomy. Sometimes the members of the family got very cross with each other, not from lack of love, but lack of space and oxygen. But it served its purpose, whether front basement or back parlor, for it "kept things together and *saved the parlor!*" Saved it! — and for what? A funeral, sometimes several of them; perhaps a wedding, and

little else. In the evening, when the children had gone to bed, and the grandparents had dozed off into dreamland, and the hard-worked father read his paper and warmed his stockinged feet, in kindly but wearied-out silence, the good wife finished the mending, wound the clock, set back the chairs, put the light out, and all was silence after nine o'clock. With occasional breaks and slight variations, this was average local life fifty or sixty years ago.

About that time a few — a very few — houses were built “double”; that is, the house was entered by a hall in the middle, and there were two front rooms, a survival of the colonial “mansion house.” One of these rooms was, of course, the parlor. The other was spared for the sitting-room. A few of these families were blessed with small collections of standard books and neat bookcases, which at once dignified these rooms with the title of “Library.”

There was not much in these bookcases to tempt any but an omniverous reader. As yet, Dickens and Thackeray were only beginners. Longfellow, Whittier, Tennyson, Carlyle, Holmes, and many of our household friends were as yet unborn into literary life. There was no *Atlantic*, no *Harper*, no weeklies, no *Century*, no *Scribner*. We had the *Knickerbocker* and *Godey's Ladies' Book*, and that was nearly all. Not that it mattered; one could get books (and we did) from the Public Library. Reading was the last thing we thought of doing in the library. Nothing but a three-days' snow storm or a sprained ankle reduced us to the domestic bookcase. There were only holland shades at the library windows, and it was light. There was an open fire, rocking chairs, a big table, and the freedom

of the family. It was a great step to be familiar with the back of books, and to learn that there were other books than the vivid annual and the big Bible for domestic reading and possession. On the whole, we all liked better to talk than to read. The kindly atmosphere of the room was in itself an education. Anybody could come in, even on a wet day. It was a court of the Gentiles separating the outside world from the inner glories of the closed and sacred parlor. Here one could write letters (make Christmas presents of fancy work, "secret, sweet, precious"), gossip with the girls, or chat with grandmother of blessed memory, while the darkened splendors of the parlor were left to the solemn feast of marriage or death.

Of course, it was not important to have many such libraries. As a matter of fact, all the young people of the neighborhood gathered together wherever there was one, and other houses were quite deserted of an afternoon or evening, while the library of this or that neighbor was full of young people.

In the course of time, there was a young girl with a bright idea. She was going to be married to what was then called "a likely young man," meaning a man in whose future there were excellent probabilities and possibilities. There was not much money on either side. Nobody expected it on the girl's side, so it was very well that she had her bright idea. There was a library in her father's house where most of the sweet hours of courtship had been spent. So, one Sunday evening in May, just before the wedding, Mary remarked to John, as they sat in the library:

"John, I have about made up my mind

that I don't care about having a Parlor in our house."

If Mary had remarked that she was fond of the toothache, or didn't care about going to heaven when she died, she could not have surprised John any more. He gasped out:

"What are you going to do without one?"

"I am thinking we'll just have a Library. You see we never go into our parlor, and all the girls and boys come right in here, anyhow. Now we'll just make believe that the parlor is across the hall, and we'll have a bookcase with a desk" (they used to call them secretaries), "and it will be convenient for you to write at. Then we'll have a good sized table. It need not be an expensive one, for we'll have a nice, large table spread. Then we will get some comfortable chairs, if we can find them, and have an open fire, and on the table we'll keep our books and my work basket, and the back room will be our dining-room, and when meals are over we'll come in here to rest. The lamp will shine out into the street and show that we are at home if any one wants to come and see us, and we will be very comfortable if they don't. Then we will not have the dining-room crowded up with all sorts of things, and ——"

"But we haven't got any books," remarked the practical John.

"That doesn't make any difference. We have a few, and they'll come if we have a place for them. Besides, everybody puts green silk curtains in a bookcase, anyhow, so nobody will know the difference."

So, of course, she carried her point, and they saved several hundreds of dollars, much wear and tear of mind, body and estate; made them-

selves and their friends comfortable, and actually lived in their own house, instead of just working, eating, and sleeping in it, being at all times their own much-honored guests.

This idea of living, really living, in one's own house, has been helped greatly by the use of the furnace, that gentle descendant of the ancient hypocaust. By this means, all parts of the house are comfortable in all weathers, and a small house serves the purpose of a larger one, utilizing all parts of it. When properly built, it secures excellent ventilation, and prevents suffering from cold and draughty floors. "The only objection," says the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, "to the completely built and fitted house of to-day is that forlorn, wizened, and sickly children do not die out as once they did, but live and hinder the survival of the fittest." But if the sanitation is so complete, they will cease to be forlorn, wizened, and sickly, and grow strong and well and rosy. So, with great deference to that high authority, I demur. Next, a good thick carpet all over the floor and an open fire, purely for sentiment and ventilation. There is no comforter like an open fire — no cheer, no sympathy like it. It ought to be compulsory that each house should have at least one fireplace. It doesn't matter much about the fuel — coal, logs, maple-wood, pine knots, driftwood, or gas jets. The cheerful blaze is what is wanted. But it will not do in this climate to dispense with the furnace.

The furnace being built, acting satisfactorily, and an end made of shutting up any part of your house, people found out how easy it is to make one's friends welcome. The closed doors opened, and soft and rich portieres made divisions

instead of partitions. The tender half-tints of modern coloring came in with restful influence, and upon wall and carpet, drapery and furniture, were pleasant colors that did not dispute or chide each other. They did not "match"; they did better — they agreed. It became possible to use a single vase or jar here and there. There were chairs for different ages, and the shape bore some reference to the curves of one's spinal column. The sofa invited one to sit down, and the heaps of pillows suited one's varying mood. China, which was not flower vases, nor yet dogs and shepherdesses, began to be found in drawing-rooms. Etchings and water colors, and, in some instances, paintings took the place of family portraits and celebrated death-beds. It was entirely too pretty to keep to one's self. It was easier to have company than not to have it.

One afternoon, somewhere, somebody said, "Afternoon tea!" The idea caught like fire to tow. It was so simple! So pleasant! One could use beautiful, odd, old cups and saucers and teapots. It was not needful to have great numbers of them all alike of stupid white china. One could dress as one pleased either to call or receive — so many pretty, original ideas were possible. One could give quite a numerous tea reception with only a boy at the door and one's own maid in the kitchen and a friend at the tea urn. One could do it often and go often, perhaps to several in one afternoon. Seeing one's pleasantest friends so often and so easily, made the feminine world more and more gracious toward each other. It suited the young ladies whose complexions would bear daylight well, and who wanted the evening for gayer enjoy-

ments. It suited the matrons who wished to be at home for the six o'clock dinner. It suited the old ladies and the delicate ones who could not bear night air. Those who drove liked to end with a tea, and so did those who walked, for a street dress was suitable; and it pleased the dressy ones, for they are always sure of their welcome everywhere.

And so it was agreed unanimously to endorse "the afternoon tea." Everybody accepted, for most people like a crowd, whatever they may say against it. There were elegant brides, and dignified mothers with budding or blossoming daughters, gay young matrons, bright, cheery old maids, cheerful widows, and dear old ladies who seldom went out except to the houses of old friends. At first, gentlemen were not invited. Afterwards, the hostesses relented and some gentlemen accepted, but, as a rule, the afternoon tea of America was in feminine hands alone.

It seemed as though the great social problem was solved. In the days of the haircloth sofa and the dark parlor, of the great evening party, with all its discomforts, and the mixture of "Mr. Dombey's set" and "Mrs. Dombey's set," the men had said (and the truth was on their side) that great parties were a bore, and when, for various reasons, chiefly the hunger for social life of some sort, their wives dragged them into these companies, the husbands stood about and sulked and voted the thing a bore.

These great parties were given at long intervals in the few great houses that the town afforded. They were costly and dull, except to the young dancers — *hopelessly* dull. People who meet so rarely do not feel at ease with each other.

Let us draw a veil over the horrors of those evenings which contained a maximum of misery to a minimum of enjoyment, and for further particulars read in "Elsie Venner" the description of "Col. Sprowle's party."

When teas came in and Madame said, "I am going to Mrs. Blank's tea this afternoon," and added, "only ladies invited," after a season of real relief, Monsieur began to wonder about it a little, and to feel as if "Mr. Dombey's set" and "Mrs. Dombey's set" assimilated much better when represented only by a female constituency. They found out each other's good points and certain discordant elements were left out of the combination. They grew into genuine friendliness and good understanding under the genial influence of the social teacup.

The Colonial dames brought out old silver teapots, and the daughters of the Revolution, who had safely hidden their precious teacups through the storms of the great Tea Party, brought them forth to tell their tales, and old families with brine in their blood showed real Chinese china, which had rounded the Cape in old ships, with leathery old captains in the last century but one, and the new family who had not the conservative salt in its veins bought new ones, just as good and far prettier, of the new wares and the choice patterns. The golden age blossomed again. It transformed alike the Colonial mansion, the Queen Anne cottage, and all the ugly intermediates, the stately stone residence and the cottages (?) on the park and lake, and it did us one and all a world of good.

Of course, there are dances for the young and drives for everybody, and dinners will always be the perfect flower of civilization, and lunch-

eons are almost as fine, and card parties will always exist for those who like them, and readings and lectures, etc., must be. But the afternoon tea, with its elastic possibilities, its endless opportunities, seems the solution of so many difficult problems that the wonder of it is that it was not sooner devised. All other entertainments are, in the nature of space and opportunities, limited — not so a tea. Portieres transform many rooms into one. Coming and going, all are not crowded together at once. There are so many advantages, that it is really too good to last.

The simplest form is best — without music, which is an impertinence if you hear it, and a superfluity if you do not, without “readings, lectures, or talks.” The simplest form of social visit is the best. The others are all good, but “that’s another story.” It is the easy, graceful opportunity to meet and greet each other, to say something if you have it to say, and not be expected to say it if you have nothing to say, to be epigrammatic if you like, or friendly, which is best of all.

This form of entertainment has done much for the social world. It has added an easy grace to the old-fashioned houses and helped make them habitable to a younger generation. It has helped the none-too-rich young housekeeper to feel that a beautiful social life was easily within her reach if only she had a welcome ready for her friends. It has done much to express the true pleasantness of American life in the close of this century, which dawned so darkly for the American Republic.

Does it occur to any one how much better housekeeping we have now than we did years

ago? The work was well done then, but the housekeeper was worn out with it. The houses are better kept, the cooking is far better, and the table better arranged and served. That it is far prettier, speaks for itself.

People are less selfish and more kindly than formerly, because they know each other better. They are better read and better talkers, and do not talk so much as they did years ago. They are better practical Christians, better nurses, better cooks. The women, especially, are stronger, fairer, and healthier, and the days when the "little woman" was the power in the land are of the past. It is not inevitable, nowadays, that a plain girl or woman is unattractive, for good health and dress have changed all that. Women are not yet perfect. They have much to learn. More consideration for those whose care and love and labor have provided them with these glorious privileges is among the virtues still to be attained. They could never have done all these beautiful things without help, without love and much self-sacrifice from the men who are their protectors. But much has been done, a nobler side of womanhood has developed. It has been shown that the want of sympathy with each other, of which women used to be so often accused, was, or at least is, a fallacy. It even goes too far the other way. And much of all this is from the houses they live in.

It is a long way from the cave-dwellers to a Queen Anne cottage, but it is a straight line, a direct evolution. It is a long run from the Arab's salt to the Golden Rule, but a straight line, a direct evolution. The result of both is seen in our homes, our dwellings, the expressions of our houses and our streets. The stones cry aloud to

us with their messages. It is the second and greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

THE DUTY OF COMMON SENSE

AN impression was borne in on my mind not long ago of the wonderful economic value of amiability and unselfishness, and others of the less reputable virtues, industry, economy, etc.

A family consisting of mother and two unmarried daughters and a married son and wife were forced to make two households for no other reason than "incompatibility of temper." The married pair, whose rights were undisputed; the mother, whose rights were moral and sentimental; and the sisters, who did something for a living and had no rights at all, only certain privileges, were all divided in feelings, opinions, etc. Neither party had enough to live upon separately in any sort of comfort, but the house was the son's. Had they been amiable and self-sacrificing, they could have lived together in comfort. But by no means would either division give up their own little tempers, although one moderate-sized dwelling ought certainly to accommodate five persons, if only a spirit of love and self-sacrifice and helpfulness prevailed.

If only some one would decide.

Madame must give up the habit of criticising the wife of her son, however much she deserves it.

Daughters must give up the habit of finding fault with the sister-in-law, and the daughter-in-law must give up the habit of general fault-finding with the rest, and sisters must give up social rights and privileges in their brother's house.

So they separated, and suffered, and I wonder which way they would have suffered most. The house, so small for five, was rather large for one pair of hands to care for, and when the baby came it would have helped a great deal if the grandmother and sisters had been there to "help out." And the mother and daughters were a good deal cramped in room and purse, in the tiny domicile in which they could afford to live. And I do not know that either household was perfectly happy, either.

A great light broke in upon me, and showed that whatever economic advantage was possessed by amiability, renunciation, etc., there was much more to life than renunciation and close packing, and that the amiable and unselfish ones were at an awful disadvantage before unreason and selfishness.

Of course, it was very convenient and economical that Mary and Lucy should share the same room and nearly everything else. That Mary should nearly always have the new gown and help a little to make over the old one for Lucy. But when Kate and Caroline tackled the same problem it was different. It wasn't right for one to give up to others *all* the time. They just hated those dreadful old stories of John giving up his girl because Tom wanted her, and Jane giving up Tom because Mary wanted him. Why should little Betty almost live on the stairs because Eleanor was too busy or feeble or lazy to wait on herself? Why should Tom give up his new suit for his sister's evening dress? And why should Jane give up everything for John's benefit? Why is there no *justice* in this world?

Well, there mostly *isn't*. That's all. But when justice is withheld, when the innocent suffer for

the guilty and stupid and, most of all, the inconsiderate, why isn't there an opening for Common Sense?

It isn't as impressive or magnificent a virtue as Renunciation, to be sure, but after all, Common Sense *is the Universal Solvent*.

Betty is quite willing to wait on Eleanor, but she needs her play, her lessons, and her rest; and most times Eleanor could wait on herself, if common sense (in the person of the mother) had taught her to do so.

If the house is small and two or more must occupy the same room, let each one do her own share in keeping the room tidy and well aired. It isn't Common Sense for one to do all, or none, and we hold these truths to be self-evident.

If there can be but one new gown, or even one *good* gown, in a family, why not sometimes buy two or more of a cheaper stuff, and all work jointly in making them up, sharing cheerfully, and not one have all or bear all?

As for the ennobling effects upon the mind of Renunciation and Self-denial, I am willing to go into court and swear to the souring effect of injustice (which is sure to come in somewhere).

One of Miss Edgeworth's stories tells of a benevolent young lady bestowing on a beggar a sum of money given to her by her father to buy a handsome dress for some very important occasion in which she was a conspicuous character. One can fancy the mortification of the father to see his daughter appear in a shabby old gown, and he wasn't sustained by a high sense of self-denial as she was. I should be tempted to call it priggishness, myself, for such generosity is rarely confined to the actual giver. The money was not really hers, but given her

for a special purpose, and the giver of the money was the real sufferer, not the girl, who, after all, may have looked very well in the old gown, or thought she did, which was all the same to her.

When you are going to make some great sacrifice of yourself, stop to think if some other person is not involved in it, equally, or even more than yourself — someone who has a right to be considered, someone entitled to the use of the universal solvent!

To be sure, unselfishness is not so very common a virtue, (or weakness,) and the self-sacrificing hero or heroine exists mostly in old-fashioned stories. But, then, is common sense so *very* common after all? Or perhaps you like to call it *Justice*.

But it is, after all, just common sense that is needed; just the plain, common variety, ripe and ready for plucking, or, perhaps, you prefer to call it *Justice*. It is like Jacques' melancholy, and is "compounded of many simples"; it requires information, proportion, promptness, fair-mindedness, and fair dealing to all. For the judicial mind is much rarer than the legal mind, which sees only the cause of the client; while *Justice*, i. e., *Common Sense*, sees equally the good of all concerned.

Let *Common Sense* take the chair and keep order in the meeting!

THINGS WHICH DO NOT "JUST HAPPEN"

GOOD PARENTS AND
CHILDREN,
GOOD HOUSEKEEPING,
HAPPY MARRIAGES,

CHRISTIAN LIVES,
GOOD NEIGHBORS,
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL
SUCCESS.

AND yet people talk as if they were all a matter of course. It is true that in the merciful scheme of life all these good things are quite usual, and the average person attains, often, to many of them. But not one is attained without much labor and pain, much self-sacrifice and self-denial. "A fortuitous combination of atoms" cannot be depended upon to bring about the best results, even if the phrase did once express a great philosopher's idea of the scheme of the creation of the Universe.

Happy marriage is almost too delicate a subject to touch upon in these days of high explosives —

"For Death is cheated, oftentimes by Divorce,
A fact which gives an equivocal force
To that beautiful phrase 'Forever'!"

—*Thomas Hood.*

But what happy and permanent marriage was ever the result of anything but the patient taking of great pains?

Love is good, but not enough. Wealth is good, but often fails. Social position is good, but is sometimes a snare to the heedless and indiscreet. And so of all good things — almost. But to most of these detriments, the taking of pains — to please others — and of cultivating one's own

sense of enjoyment, of avoiding all waste of happy opportunities of enjoyment, will neutralize the poison of egotism and selfishness which lies at the bottom of most troubles.

Certainly good housekeeping does not come of itself, unless, for a brief and heavenly period, when things seem to go one's own way. Thinking, planning, watching and not wasting, spending and taking care of unconsidered trifles, until the final adjustment is so good that it seems automatic. All these are required in the management of a household, and even with the most faithful care the saving grace of charm and humor may be lacking and "the well-conducted household" be as dry and uninteresting and tasteless as a machine shop. And these do not come of themselves always, nor without effort.

Doctor Holmes says that to produce a successful character one must begin with one's grandmother. Good, but difficult. But we may begin with our grandchildren's grandmother, and by self-culture and self-restraint produce good grandmothers to our possible grandchildren. Many of us know some charming old people. All of us know many charming young folks. And we cannot believe that these delightful, kind, sweet, and tender young people are going to degenerate into the dreadful old men and women that we sometimes see. They need not, and we hope that they will not. But it is going to take lots of pain and care and trouble all through life to produce this charming result. And maybe you cannot do it.

"The little pig with the curly tail
And his satiny skin all pinky-pale,
Is a very different thing by far
To the lumps of iniquity big pigs are."

Christian lives do not grow into sweetness and holiness simply by joining a church and giving liberal checks to worthy objects, nor by giving out-of-season clothes to the worthy poor, nor even talking well in religious meetings, although these are all good things, but by "the snapping up of unconsidered trifles" of word, act, and life which go to make this world fit to live in and the next world the abode of all that is good and pure.

You may do all and more than is laid down in any law or gospel, and spoil it all in a moment by a sour look and wicked word, a cruel neglect. You may be a technical Christian, but if you are a disagreeable one, you are worse than a tinkling cymbal — if there is such a thing.

What good children I have known! Too good for their own and their parents' good, spoiling the dear old people with their self-denial, and letting them grow into habits of self-indulgence, by looking on their care and love and sacrifice as a matter of course, and allowing them to waste youth and opportunity. It costs incalculably to be such a good child (*and it ought not to be allowed*).

When one hears of business or professional failures it is common to hear it said sometimes, "What bad luck So-and-So has!" Now, I do not underrate the mysterious element of chance. It may appear in the unpreventable form of "fire, famine, or pestilence, battle, murder, or sudden death." For the occurrence of these no man should be blamed, unless it is a form of negligence by which it appears; but when untidiness and wastefulness, disorder, carelessness, extravagance, idleness, and bad habits make for the destruction of prosperity.

I once knew a nice, little, old lady who faithfully tried to earn a living by a little shop. But she never knew whether she had the goods desired; all the boxes and drawers and shelves were in all sorts of disorder. Goods were soiled by much searching and tossing about, and the poor creature was discouraged and ruined by no other means than her disorderly habits, for we all got tired of waiting while she hunted things up. So in all and greater shops, and all business — nothing succeeds automatically.

“You are a good neighbor to me,” said one to another. “I never had a better neighbor.” “Yes, I know it,” was the unexpected answer. “I meant to be. I knew it all the time.” And, like every other good thing, it did not “just happen.”

For success in all things is, as Sir Joshua Reynolds defines genius, “A capacity for taking infinite pains.”

A FEW OF THE BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, KNOWN AS QUAKERS

Recalled from the Memory of the Talk of My Father, James Miller, of Buffalo (One of That Society), Who Died in 1877.

My Dear Friend:

YOU asked me to write down the main points of the religious beliefs of the "Society of Friends," commonly called Quakers. This is what I remember of the speech of my father, who was of that persuasion, and who died in 1877. Since then I have held no conversations with any one upon these subjects, and it is simply recalled from memory. To those who believe that all of the Friends' belief is comprised in a broad-brimmed hat or a drab gown, I mention these few points of belief:

First — They speak of their own society as the "Society of Friends," and of their places of worship as "Meeting-houses." "The church is built of up living members" and the name must not be perverted to speak of buildings, the work of men's hands. Their annual convention in Philadelphia is "The Yearly Meeting," as all others are "First day meetings," etc.

Second — The names of the months and the days of the week are rejected as being those of Pagan gods and idols. They speak of "First, Second, Third, months, etc.; First day, Second day, etc." I notice that accountants of late employ numbers instead of the elaborate names of months and days.

Third — Swearing of all sorts, even the judicial oath, is forbidden. As a witness, an “affirmation of the truth of which I am about to speak” is permitted. But it is also forbidden to a Friend to appear as a party in a lawsuit, and is strictly against the “discipline of the Meeting.” Neither is violent language or conduct allowed; nor resistance to law, order, or even disorder.

Fourth — They believe, above all, in a gospel of peace, love, and non-resistance to evil of law or oppression (“If one smite thee on one cheek, turn the other also,” etc.). All sympathy of word, act, or thought in all that concerns war and strife, battles or military matters of any sort or kind, of aiding, abetting, or sympathy, is against discipline.

Fifth — Concerning the ordinances, or sacraments — or ceremonies — peculiar views are held, and discipline enacted. Marriage is regarded as a civil contract; the contracting parties take each other by the right hand, in the presence of two or more witnesses, and promise to live together faithfully and lovingly as man and wife. No wedding ring is used, and, although a certificate is allowed, it is not always given. The marriage is recorded in the book of the meeting and signed by witnesses. A good supper is provided, and that is about all there is to the marriage ceremony. It is essentially the form of the “civil marriage”—which is now practiced nearly all over the world, and the only marriage held legal everywhere, no matter what religious rites or beliefs prevail. I never heard divorce mentioned, although separation in extreme cases is allowed. (If people live together in the calm, loving, self-controlled fashion of the Friends, divorce ceases to be a prominent

question.) A form of marriage is often held before a justice, mayor, or other civil officer.

Sixth — Marriage with those of a different belief is “contrary to discipline” and is punished by expulsion from the Society, if it takes place. If only planned, it is a subject of reproof and remonstrance from the Elders.

Seventh — Funerals are conducted with the greatest simplicity. Personally, I never saw one, but all show and pomp is forbidden. No monuments are permitted and even headstones are discouraged, and if allowed, contain only name and date. This is a protest against the pride and expense involved in such services. Mourning is never worn — “Our afflictions are sent in love and for one’s spiritual benefit.” Mourning is rebellion against the removal of the happy spirit and the love of the Father who doeth all things well, even beyond all we can ask or seek. The symbol of the Lord’s Supper is only recognized as a symbol in memory of Him, and is observed, if at all, in silence, meditation, and prayer, unless the Holy Spirit moves one to a message. It has been so perverted by a false doctrine that symbols are discouraged as leading to perversion.

“The inward light,” the gift and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is always recognized as a sufficient guide of life. The religious meetings are conducted in silence and sobriety, and the meeting-place is of the severest plainness. Men and women sit apart. The men wear their hats, the women bonnets of their own peculiar shape. They meditate in silence and await a message of the Spirit. It may come by man or woman. I think that a man would remove his hat in giving it, if it came to him. A woman takes off her bonnet, lays it aside, while speaking in the

invariable muslin cap — “A woman must not speak uncovered in the churches.” The word “church” is always to be understood as referring to its living members, for the building is always called the “Meeting-house.” A paid preacher is unheard of, but for those who have often messages of the Holy Spirit to deliver, and who give up much time and comfort to do so, entertainment is provided. But almost always they have some regular employment or means of livelihood. The hour is spent in meditation, silence, and prayer, except for these so-inspired messages. When the hour is spent, the two eldest men in the meeting, who sit upon the front seats, rise and shake hands with each other, and then with the two seated nearest them. This is followed by a quiet, kindly, and general handshaking and a sweet and slow departure is made — “Like parting friends, who linger while they sever.” If any strangers are present, they are greeted in a friendly way, and if unaccompanied by friends, they will be invited to dinner — maybe more than once. They may have five or six invitations before getting out of the house.

Their poor members are most carefully protected, but, if able to work, are not encouraged in idleness. They discourage almshouses, for “He setteth the solitary in families,” and suitable employment is provided when it is practicable. I do not know about their hospitals, but doubtless they exist. In the days of the simple life, Friends were often called (and willingly responded) to nurse the sick, and to console and comfort the dying and sorrowful.

What is called “the plain language” is the usual English of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of England and afterward of the colo-

nies. The "Thee and Thou" of the Quaker is the "Du" of the German and the "Tutoyer" of the French; as also the distinctive dress of the Friends was the form prevailing in the days of the Stuarts, the somber colors and absence of all ornament being the Spirit's protest against the luxury, license, and extravagance of the court and aristocracy of that time. Their souls (like our own at times) were vexed with constant change, selfishness, and licentious living. Their whole lives were protests against all forms of pride, pomp, ceremonial show, and extravagance, and which are all contrary to the life and teaching of Christ, who was meek, humble, simple, and self-denying.

Baptism is recognized as a spiritual gift, and not otherwise to be bestowed. The baptism of the Essential Spirit of God having taken place, the baptism of water is now superfluous and is liable (as being only a symbol) to perversion in its value and significance, and offering another opportunity for pomp, pride, and other diversions of the original meaning. This view is quite apart from any discussion of modes of baptism, as the Baptism of the Spirit is alone essential.

The special seasons of feasting (as at Christmas) and of fasting and prayer (as at Lent, etc.) are not accepted. The date of Christmas is considered doubtful, and the license — drunkenness and gluttony — of Christmas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries required a special protest, which was to utterly ignore all that in which Christmas differs from the other days. So also with Lent — "But ye, when ye fast, seem not unto men to fast." "Pray without ceasing." Live a godly, pious, temperate, and prayerful life at all times. What is good at one

time is good at all times. What is wrong or unwise at one time is so always.

In some old Quaker families the plain language is used in the family almost as an endearment, of which indeed they were not lavish. This was customary with many, not Quakers, one hundred years ago and less. My grandfather, a priest of the Church of England, habitually used "thee and thou" to his wife, my grandmother, as an endearment.

The transformation of the court gallants to the demure Quakers, by exclusion of color and ornament, was a safeguard to the life, soul, and purse of the Quaker. Music — an essential part of the pleasure of world's people — was strictly forbidden. Even lullabys were not encouraged. This seems strange, but was a part of the self-denial required.

They were fond of flowers, gardens, lawns, trees, and of fruit and vegetable culture. Their tables were more than abundant, and cooking became a fine art, justified by their lavish hospitality. "First day" became thus a day of hard labor from the amount of visiting and good eating encouraged among them. Also the delicacy of color and exquisite fineness of fabric, in time, perverted the plain dress to a real extravagance. Philadelphia is one of the gastronomical centers of the world.

The more ornate forms of life and worship appeal most to the young, and the complications of forms and services to them, as to many of the older people, is counted as righteousness. The voice of priest, the pealing organ, and the song of praise, not to speak of robes and emblems, and days and hours of devotion, are spiritual helps to many, and whatever makes for right-

eousness is good. Only let us beware of taking shadow for substance; symbol for truth. The superfluities of religious services, as well as of social and public life, lose significance as life goes on. The religion of Friends is better adapted to the calm period of middle life and old age than to the "hot heart of youth."

And youth must guide and advance the world. I am not preaching a Quaker sermon; only stating a few of their most prominent doctrines. By their truth shall they stand or fall. After this it is hardly needed to say that all forms of worldly amusement, music, dancing, play-going, circuses and playing, and everything of the sort was strictly forbidden.

The Friends were fond of good horses, kept them well, and did not race them or bet on anything. They often were fond of fishing, and were mighty men of the rod and line; also good sailors and merchants and traders — and I have known them to go a-fishing even on First day, if other things favored the sport, inconsistent as it seemed.

Politically, the Friends have always been identified with reform and advancement. Elizabeth Fry, in her work with women prisoners of Newgate, opened the way to much needed reform in prisons, and in the penal code of England.

From the first, they opposed slavery. They refused to use slave-grown cotton and sugar, and well knew where the free labor could be procured for its culture, and where the "free cotton" and sugar and rice could be bought. Many a Quaker went to jail for helping runaway slaves, and every Quaker residence was a station of the "Underground railroad." Female suffrage

has always had its advocates among them. Lucretia Mott, a famous preacher, took strong ground for it. Temperance and social purity have had vigorous advocacy among them. I lack details or names to give much information on these themes. Isaac Hopper was one of the earliest to move in those directions in Philadelphia. Macaulay did his brilliant worst to blacken the character of William Penn, most prominent of Quakers, but later research shows that it was not our William at all, but a distant and dissolute cousin of the same name.

William Penn, son of the famous Admiral Penn, was intimate with court circles, their usages and faults. He was on terms of personal intimacy with Charles II., and, as young men, they were fond of each other, and took great liberties with each other.

"Take off thy hat, friend William," said Charles, as the two young men were together in the king's chamber.

"Not to an earthly king do I uncover, friend Charles," said William.

"Then," said Charles, giving his own plumed hat a toss, "here goes mine then, for only one of us can wear a hat where I am."

They were always good friends, although William would not take off his hat, nor Charles forsake his vices, and it was owing to Charles' graceful and impudent fashion of giving away that which did not belong to him that the woods of Penn became the property of William Penn, and the scene of that famous treaty with the Indians that was never broken.

"Good Quakish, no tell lie," said Red Jacket to my father, long before I was born.

I have only tested my memory in giving these

beliefs and practices of this most remarkable people. I have not spoken with one of that belief in many years. The good they did lives after them, and is incorporated in what is best in our government and our traditions. They suffered much for their ideas of truth. But it is hard to contradict much of their teachings and lives. They have finished most of their work and have caused others to help to do it. And as the fallen trees said to the wind in the clearing :

“We have served!
We have served.”

THE OWL AND THE CHICKEN

SAID the Plymouth Rock chicken, that juvenile fowl,
To his elderly uncle, the great barn-owl:
“The sun is so bright and the barnyard so gay;
Why do you stay shut up this bright summer day?”

Said the owl, with a wink and a vigorous sneeze,
Which seized him at once from the hay-laden breeze,

“It’s all very fine, and it’s perfectly true,
That the sun shines bright, but I’m older than you.

And if one cares the least little mite
For preserving one’s beauty, and keeping one’s sight,

Or of having a lot of genuine fun,
He’ll keep out of the reach of that glorious sun.

When the light falls soft over treetop and field,
And the charm of the evening makes nature to yield

To the glamour of night, and the spirit of life
Gains victory over the spirit of strife,
Then I spread my soft wings and in silence I sail

By the light of the moon, on the sweet summer gale,

While the world lies below, and the breast of the deep

Softly rises and falls, with the quiet of sleep.
Then my eyes open wide and I seek for my prey,
The small creatures that hide from the dazzle of day;

The mice that come out to nibble the wheat,
Or the night-bird, hungry, his supper to eat.
There's no joy by day like the hunt by night,
And no sport in the sun like my midnight flight."
"Oh! how charming is this!" clucked the silly
chick,

As he scratched up a worm, and swallowed him
quick;

"I often feel that I'm smothered quite
In the feathers soft of my mother at night;
It's ever so nice to sleep under a bush
On a hot afternoon, far away from the rush
And the chatter and clatter of all other things,
And sleep when not even the grasshopper sings;
But to float on wide wings in the evening sky,
And sup on the moths that by twilight fly!
I'll try it some night, when my mother's at rest,
And put the truth of these tales to the test."

He had eaten the seeds of the pepper, so gay,
It affected his head in a singular way,
And there came no sleep to his restless eye,
When the spirit of mischief, wild and sly,
Came into his head, and his silly brain
Was turned by the murmur of summer rain.
So he slipped from the nest so slyly and quick,
And was not missed from the brood of chicks.
It was very dark, but the rain had stopped,
And out in the barnyard the chicken popped;
And he spread his frail wings and tried to fly,
When a rustling of plumage came soft from the
sky;

And he rose in his flight through the evening
light,

In the clasp of a claw that was hard and tight.
And he only stopped in the owl's dark nest,
Where his young ones dwelt — you know the
rest.

MORAL

If you are a chick and your wings are frail,
Don't list to the owl's attractive tale.
Your wings are weak and your strength is small,
And your power of flight is just nothing at all.
To enjoy the fun one must *be* an owl,
And not a poor little biddy-fowl.
At the feast they invite you; your only share
Is a corner dark, as an inside fare.
Those midnight joys come only to owls,
And not to common and foolish fowls.
And the only safe place for a chicken to stay
Is the nest by night and the yard by day.

ON THE PASSING OF TENDERNESS

IN the repression of expression lurks danger of the death of real feeling. Not in all natures, for with some "one gains in intention what one loses in extension." But in most — that is, the average individual (who is chiefly referred to) — expression encourages and develops feeling. It is not easy to those of English blood to give utterance to feelings, even of the most genuine and intense kind. Therefore, a little encouragement along those lines is a very good thing.

One of the deplorable consequences of scientific progress is the fad which forbids caresses or kisses to little children and to lovers. Of course, lovers will probably take care of the matter for themselves, but little children (although something is to be said on the other side) suffer for the lack of daily and hourly tenderness. I quite understand that it should be forbidden to allow strangers to kiss babies or to meddle with them in any way. Of course, in the caresses of an invalid there is often a real danger. But with reasonable precaution, and outside these conditions, the friendly and loving caresses of a family are a heaven-sent blessing. It compensates for so much that may be denied. It rewards one for suffering. It encourages personal habits of delicacy and purity. In fact, I don't see how a family can otherwise be properly brought up.

"Supposing," as the children say, your baby is bathed and dressed in its soft little nightgown, and the little white bed is ready, just how are

you going to help yourself and hinder yourself from good-night hugs and kisses? Also the physicians and nurses forbid any attention to the child after it has gone to bed. Some of us remember the horrors of loneliness and imagination which comes to a child alone in the dark, "ere slumber's chain hath bound one."

Just a few minutes — just a loving caress — just a lullaby — just a doll to hug — just a story, maybe only the beginning of it — just a warm wrap-up, or a tuck-up — and then sweet sleep! How much sweeter, no one but a lonely child itself can tell. It makes all the difference in the world.

The practice of putting a child down to sleep and leaving it alone is not so bad, in itself, besides being a convenience and a blessing to the family. But to let it lie alone, crying and wailing in helpless misery, to worry out the hour assigned to sleep (?) is outrageous cruelty, if all the nurses and doctors in Christendom said to the contrary. A child has no speech. Its cry is its only signal of distress or need. No child finds it amusing. It needs something, when it cries long and persistently. It is the business of the nurse or mother to find out that need, and to supply the lack which the baby knows much better than any one else, and would tell you if it could.

I knew a dear child nearly parboiled to death, because the nurse allowed and compelled her to "cry it out" until the allotted hour has passed, and then found the baby lying in a pool of scalding water from a bursted hot-water bag lying in the cradle.

And another (more than one, too), which, being a "good" baby, did not cry, but slept and

slept and slept, till the weak little heart stopped its weary task — children with weak hearts do so occasionally.

“The formation of good habits” is a sort of slogan among that sort of nurse and mother. How long does the best of habits endure in a baby? They must vary with every growth and development, frequently and constantly.

A certain regularity in feeding, sleeping, etc., is desirable, of course, but the rapid growth and development requires constant watching and care. I knew a well-intentioned young mother to nearly starve her baby to death. The doctor had ordered half a pint of food a day at a certain period of growth. But she faithfully kept the child on a half pint a day for three months, spite of the demands of the child for more, and horrified the doctor by asserting that she was acting on “strict orders given three months ago by himself.”

Well, all this only shows the need of common sense, and it also shows the need of tenderness and loving watchfulness. “Wise saws” are all very well, but “modern instances” and their application are also needed greatly.

When one remembers the millions of babies who are brought up on “bread and cheese and kisses,” and often little besides, one cannot doubt that petting and cream make a pretty good diet after all, and that even kisses are not wholly pernicious.

Great danger to tenderness of heart lies in the doctrine of the “New Thought,” or the “Christian Science,” and the “Mind Cure,” or whatever name it may be called. It is most stultifying to emotion of pity and love, if one believes the suffering to be unreal. How can they

pity pain which does not exist? Why should men and women try to relieve a fictitious agony? To what end should anæsthetics lend aid in surgery if this were true?

A disease which imagination creates may be cured by imagination, not otherwise. Self-control prevents the complaint from annoying others, and the sufferer from being a nuisance to his neighbors, but it does not spare him one pang.

Hypnotism influences pain, but *pain exists* — the one incontrovertible fact in the whole creation.

Pain has its uses and its values. It is the danger signal and cries out for help. It exists. It often stimulates the finer qualities of mind and soul. "One learns in suffering what is taught in song."

Beda, the Venerable, knew that he was dying. He had set himself the task of translating into the vernacular English the Latin gospel of St. John. Through his mortal agony, and stimulated by it, he wrote till his pen dropped, and he could only dictate to the faithful scribe who wrote constantly, and with the last words:

"This is the disciple which testifies of these things, and we know that his testimony is true," his stainless soul departed, and the glorious gospel belonged to the English-speaking people. This was no miracle. His pain cried out greatly and he used grandly all the strength *he had*, and bore his pain, doing his Lord's will. But the pain was *real*, and not a morbid mental attitude.

But if that scribe had said constantly: "Master, you do not suffer, you have no pain. Put aside the thought of it." What hardness of heart would have gripped and held that young writer?

The habit of resignation to the pain of other

people may be carried too far. So far, indeed, as to feel a growing habit of impatience with the sufferers themselves. From that habit of impatience with the inconvenience of age and suffering, to the cool discussion of the advisability of shortening that period, and the wisdom of allowing science to pass upon the ending of that period by harmless anæsthesia is a very short step. Granting that, with our weak vision, we feel that it may be wise and kind to shorten the visible suffering of our beloveds in their apparently last hours, who, that knows the fallability of human judgment, the sad deceitfulness of the human heart, dares to trust to mere man, the decision as to when the progress and painful character of the illness justifies the kindness of anæsthesia?

That such cases exist, perhaps, is true, but who shall be trusted with the Key to the Eternal Peace?

“Oh! loving Mother Ganges! to thy care we leave him!” is the ascription of the tender-hearted pagan who buries his living but aged parent in its sacred mud, in the sight of the crocodiles.

Shall not Christian men and women shudder at the thought, and, instead of hastening the end, comfort the declining hours to the best of their ability, and thereby obtain the blessing of “him who was ready to perish?”

This is the view that the law takes. “Life is the privilege of all, unless forfeit to the law for crimes.” The law protects the first and last hours of life, the helpless beginning and the hour of death, when the terrible temptation arises to shorten them.

There is none too much visible tenderness in

the world. Do not let enlightenment or fads come between loving hearts. The real Love Spirit in the world grows. Let its exhibition help to brighten the dark days. The welcome of the new-born baby helps to brighten all its days. Perhaps the baby does not know it, but the mother does, and it leaves its impress forever on her heart.

It is the privilege of women — American women — to receive a world of loving attention from the men who love them. It is also their privilege to respond. Once in a while, I think, it is not graciously done. The noblest study of woman is man — mere man, and his needs, which a good many put aside, and a good man is apt to put aside himself and ignore himself to serve his family more effectually.

“Evil is wrought by want of thought,” and sooner or later it appears. It is here that common sense steps in to the help of love and tenderness, and all must assist or the service loses its flavor. For, when too much is asked of an already wearied body and soul, sooner or later it gives out and the world wonders why.

Selfishness and unselfishness are not confined to sex, although manifestations in each sex differ. If a man does a thing, good or bad, he is most likely to do it alone, asking neither help, sympathy, or approval. It is narrow, but it is his way. A woman, whether selfish or otherwise, needs help. If a man helps some one in distress, he puts his hand in his own pocket, and gives up his own time and strength and money. In time he comes to organization, but it is not his original plan. A woman soon finds that she has not the money, strength, time, or influence to do very much without help, so when “A sees B in

trouble, she asks C to help her” and does not consider that D and E, and the rest of the alphabet are all involved and suffer. H and J have no uplift, and feel bitterly the sacrifice imposed on them. These are cases where an enlightened organization is needed, and the personal note is often omitted. But between the members of the family it is personal, and the stranger intermeddles only to their detriment. There is only one John and Mary in a married pair, and each heart should know its own needs and its own love, and should especially consider only each other and the children that God has given them. And the fewer experiments that are tried to test the affection and character and resistance of each, the better, and the more perfect love, faith, confidence, and tenderness prevails, the wiser and happier the lives, even to the end of long, perhaps very long, life.

THE FAIRY TALES OF SCIENCE

NEVER since the days of the earliest youth of the muses has there been written so little of rhyme, metre, or rhythm, when sweet thoughts of love and the heroic act of man is so released from the worrying harness imposed upon its Pegasus. Never was atmosphere of any period so filled with soul poetry.

Never has the greatest love been so fully expressed, when many men lay down their lives for their friends, even for their enemies.

At this moment the great procession of fully armed and equipped battle ships of one of the earth's greatest naval powers is passing through the great Suez Canal, itself a triumph of recent years, completing a peaceful and fraternal girdle of a world, all at peace with its neighbors. There is a message for the ships to hasten on their way. To a festival? Not so. To the help of a nation, prostrate under the earthquake's heavy hand. Pausing only for its message, the fleet hastens with all its ample stores and equipment, its clear brains and sturdy arms. It meets its own supply ship, the huge "Celtic," loaded, with rushing speed and working overtime. All done in forty-eight hours. For a feast? To meet deserved congratulations? No! For a free gift to the survivors of that most awful of earthly calamities, the earthquake of Messina, which swept out two cities into the choking straits between Sicily and Italy. A calamity which sent the king and queen of Italy into the wreck and ruin, if, perchance, they could (as they did!) help that desolate land and people to a chance for life.

When the wounded and dying were carried into the great halls of the Vatican, that the Pope might, in person, bless and help them, where was written a grander poem than that comprised in these few statements, these few sentences!

In the old warlike days, before our Saviour taught the blessed lesson of Love to one's neighbors, how quickly would those war ships, Levantine pirate or savage Viking, have descended on those stricken shores, plundering treasures and subduing all survivors to slavery and subjection and captivity!

Punch shows it in "The Recent Bombardment of Messina" where boxes, bales, crates, and barrels are flying ashore from the guns and mortars of the war ships. Has it occurred to you that the world is at peace, *and intends to be?*

We read in the "Arabian Knights" of the queer horse with a peg in his neck, and when you turned the peg up you went in the air, and away you went for miles and miles "strange countries for to see," and back again before morning if you so wished — and the magic carpet which was much the same thing. But over your coffee, you see in the morning paper the cold-blooded advertisement of the "Aerial Ship Company," "Direct Route from Boston to Washington."

"Over the fleecy clouds we go!"

It makes dull prose of Grimm's lovely swan story, and the song of the Morning Stars was not more far-reaching than the mysterious voiceless whispers of Marconi's marvelous device, or "the sound of a voice that is dead," from the magical Victor.

But most wondrous of all is the mystical bracelet of the "Soul Machine" of Doctor Peter-

son of New York. When it is clasped on the wrist of the lying witness, and the lie leaps forth in a tongue of flame upon the blank record before him, the Recording Angel puts his pen behind his ear and whispers, "I ought to have thought of that! These mortals are infringing on my patent!"

Homer, in an atmosphere charged with poems of all ages, pervaded with deities, gods, and demi-gods, never suggested so poetical an idea!

And yet it is the every-day life of this prosaic nineteenth and twentieth centuries! And they call the twentieth century a period of prose because there is no song from the poets! The Singers of the grove are silent.

The great telescopes are watching Mars, its so-called canals, its changes and suggestions more or less of atmosphere, and of likenesses to our own planet. They all but meditate excursions to the Red Planet. They are all but persuaded that the Martians wink at them.

Who can fit a rhyme to such thoughts? It is too vast an idea to chain to a measure. The music of the Morning Stars silences mortal music.

Thus far had I written when the silent, viewless, wireless, sea-borne message called out of the darkness and fog of the North Atlantic the cry from the sinking "Republic"; the death call of the great liner. Over the freezing waters it sped! Boston heard and all Nantucket shores and ships responded and the outward-bound steamers turned back. The fog was full of the voices of ships — not one, but many; and before the misty dawn had come or the cruel fog had lifted, all were saved, safe — and from the

last spar of the sinking ship the captain sprung into the boiling sea and was saved, too.

There were, it is said, no hysterics, no screams, no selfishness, and the brave and uncomplaining passengers and the brave and fearless crew passed in the thick fog and darkness from the broken and maimed liner to the life-boats, women first, according to the stern and tender law of the Anglo-Saxon race, which prefers the weaker. No wild cries of fear and despair.

The steward, faithful to needs of suffering passengers and watchful and faithful to needs of the brave and cool operator sending, in ceaseless calls, for help into the fog and darkness.

There was not wanting the sense of humor so strong in Americans, which helped to see the grotesque, and lift the awfully tragical pressure of the situation.

The heroic captain and telegrapher would not even let themselves be made heroes, when the men ashore would have carried them on their shoulders, but escaped and hid — in a bath.

This also is poetry!

But the pace is too strong for the mincing trot or gallop of rhyme and rhythm.

The breath of the whirlwind proclaims it, and the wings of the morning are left behind in swift flash of the electric spark.

THE BY-PRODUCTS OF CHARITY

THE by-products of chemistry are such agents as may be revealed in a search for certain definite substances, as when smelting silver, lead is discovered, or silver in the melting of lead ore.

In distilling or refining coal-oil or naphtha, many chemical substances of great value in medicine or the arts reveal themselves; sometimes they have proved of much greater importance than the objects of the original experiment. Radium was (so-called) accidentally discovered.

Sometimes such results are attained by works of charity (so-called) which, undertaken solely for the benefit of others, result in most valuable rewards in the development of personal character in the doers of these good deeds. For example: A corporate body is formed for one single specific purpose, say, the care of aged women or of orphan children. It has a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, sundry managers and committees, such as is common to all organized charity work. None of the men or women have had much experience in this special business. It was needed work and they have gone into it in singleness of heart, solely to relieve want and sorrow.

But it is by no means a simple affair. If it were the management of the poor-house it might be, for "Mr. and Mrs. Bumble" do not permit any complications. The paupers have so much (or so little) to eat and drink and wear. The county pays for it, and that is all there is to

it. It may be relief work. It is certainly not charity.

But our friends have determined to really understand what they are doing, so they listen patiently to dull, sad stories, common enough, but all important to the actors and the sufferers. It takes patience, reticence, and sympathy. One is persuaded that each experience is unique. Never any one suffered as these are suffering.

When patience has had her perfect work in listening, one goes to work to care for these needy ones. One gives them of one's substance, of one's goods, one's time and strength. Temper is repressed, and kindness begins to blossom as the rose. Some of these managers are plain, quiet people, but soon their outlook widens. Some had the impression of utter selfishness and greed among the poor. Further acquaintance shows how good they often are to each other, how unselfish, often so self-denying.

One learns so much by being a manager of such a work. There is but little money and it must be managed most carefully, and by self-denial, eked out to much greater efficiency. There is more to do than to magnificently "draw a check." One must often go into chests and storeroom, attic, and cellar. Sometimes you doubt which needs it most, you or they, and inward grace gives the answer. One even learns much of our forgotten arithmetic by planning for these needs.

In the committee meetings there is much to be learned. All have equal rights to courtesy, attention, and interest, and before one knows it one is educated, not only in politeness but etiquette.

The housekeeping of such an establishment is

under constant and public inspection. No hiding holes are permitted. "The house was in its usual good order," is the constant report, and such usual good order does not "just happen so."

It means constant and exact planning, constant, laborious care and cleaning, and other happy faculties of order. This public crystallization of private practices of good housekeeping is a constant education of the members of the board. For, while no one knows everything, every one knows something, and good ideas are brought forth and discussed in the weekly executive meetings, as it might be in a convention of one of the learned professions.

Thus is developed good housekeeping, good management, and often good taste.

These poor wards of ours, some feeble little children, some frail old folks, many ignorant; all needing, like little children, the same sweetness and patience to manage them. The prime object of the work is the comfort and happiness of your needy wards. And you become the better parents to your own children because of your work among them. And maybe better children to your own aged parents.

Men and women, especially women, come to understand each other in a corporate body more than in any other way, and if they are any sort of good people they grow to respect each other, and to work together, each according to her special gifts, as the years go on, and they often love each other with a love that is past understanding. Friendships grow up between them. They love their poor friends, but they greatly love their associates in charitable work.

Lives thus lived take on a polish in manners, a courtesy and a consideration for each other

not to be acquired in any social life outside of this. Many who take up such work, even from ennui, find their lives so full of the sadness of wisdom, the sweetness of love, that never again are there to them idle days or dull hours.

Thus far I have spoken only of organized charity and its effect upon hitherto unformed character, as well as the effects of continued well-doing upon long lives and constant association with those of kindred feelings, work, and opinions.

But for the precious work with the "ninety and nine which went not astray" the real preparation must be complete before much can be accomplished. One must be ready in the beginning. Like poets, such are born, not made, or the time and chance are wasted. It must be learned, if at all, at the mother's knee, at the home and the table.

Many, good in these ways, are not good in public charity. The poor, or the suffering, or the needy but utterly blameless one, is timid, often proud and very sensitive, needing the most delicate touch and the wisest tact to do anything to a really good result. Your reward is paid in advance. Only a lady, in the finest and best sense, is ready for such deeds. Painful truths must often be ignored or softly handled. Especially in giving, there is no need to make these trying facts conspicuous.

"Why have I such good friends?" said one of these to me. "I can do nothing for them."

"But if I really needed help and you could help me, you'd do it, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, indeed I would. Indeed I would."

"Well, then, let's play that it is that way, and that you are doing it to me. Now, how would

you like to do it? I'm sure that yours would be the best way."

And so it was, and so I learned how, for in such ways one finds that love, and only love, "is the fulfillment of the law."

CONCERNING THE DUTIES, OBLIGATIONS AND PRIVILEGES OF OTHERS

IT is required of us that we act unto others as we desire them to act toward us. This is sufficient. It is not required that we do for them things we never dreamed of them doing for us. If we do this, it should be counted unto us as righteousness, not a social obligation. We hear so much of "our duty to others" that it grows to seem as if we were swallowed up in such obligations to outsiders to the annihilation of all individual claims, rights, or desires.

It is quite time someone spoke on the other side. It is time that "others" were a little enlightened concerning their own obligations. It may be more blessed to give than to receive, but the other man should also have his chance at the blessing.

In nearly every large family, and many small ones, there is one — possibly two, but rarely — who, by common consent, gives up self, time, and often much more precious belongings, from a sense that these others have a claim on everything they possess, and that it should be given up without a murmur to these vampires — and it really grows to be vampirism if not checked in time. Wise parents check this injustice toward one of their children, but all parents are not wise, and, strange to say, all parents are not good or kind to their children, and one of them is the drudge of the rest. Sometimes it is "the other way about" and the parents are the exacting ones. I am not now speaking of those who,

by reason of great age or great infirmity, require great sacrifices, and accept them without thought. By that time it is too late to say one word, for one must do one's duty in that sphere of life to which one is called with what patience and sweetness and love one can summon. I mean in youth, and middle age, and elderly years before the mould of character is so hopelessly set as to be beyond all chance of modification.

It should not always be the same one who is elected to stay at home from the tempting treat that the rest may go. Let the "others" take their turn as well. The one who takes the odd stitches, gives up the daily paper or the new book, lends her new gloves and neckwear, should not always be the same one.

"I have brought up a large family," said one mother. "All are happily married but the youngest. I intend to keep her at home for myself. I have given up enough; one is my right." So the one, who was best of all calculated to enjoy a home, gave up all, and when the mother — a loving and good mother, too — was taken home, there was no home but that of the other sisters, no children but theirs, welcoming and loving, it is true — but not her own.

"Now your girls are all married but Susy," said the neighbor to another mother, "you'll not let her go; you'll keep her for your own old age." "Susy has as good a right to a husband and home as her sisters," said this mother, "and if she marries I shall have another son." And so she did, and sons and daughters all loved and cared for her, and in the future called her blessed.

With the passing of the law of primogeniture from this country was born the possibility of

justice to *all* one's children — and in every way, besides the tenure of property.

It is not only the family — far from it — where the tyranny of “others” is felt. If one is willing to do a difficult or unpleasant thing, be sure that they *may* do it, unless they have the courage to be disagreeable and refuse outright, which is not always easy or pleasant.

Equal rights are conceded. It is equal privilege which is disputed. Nay, “others” even feel that these unreasonable exactions are privileges, and well-paved roads to heaven in the bargain. One remembers that story of Dickens (I forget its name) where a little boy was crushed under the weight of a “Moloch of a baby.” Poor little fellow! Let us hope that when Moloch grew bigger he was loving and just to his tiny nurse.

I just throw out these suggestions to those who forget the rights and privileges of “others,” and give up more of themselves than they really possess the right to dispose of. A wise and discriminating selfishness is good for one's soul — also the souls of others. It prevents them from growing too selfish. In the social republic, equal rights and equal privileges, equal courtesies and equal self-denials, are the privileges of each and all, and some day some well-bred Spartacus will raise the standard of protest and revolt, and politely, kindly, and generously insist upon the rights of all as well as those of others.

THE DOLL'S BOOTH

MISS POLLY DOLLY ADALINE is
going to the Fair;
She wants to see the minister and all the
ladies there.

She isn't very big and she isn't very wise,
But she has a pretty frock and bonny bright
blue eyes,

And gentle rosy cheeks and yellow curling hair;
So Polly Dolly Adaline is going to the Fair.

She's coming in good season and she'll have a
lovely time —

I'm going to tell the reason, in rather halting
rhyme.

For Polly Dolly Adaline is silent and discreet,
The same in joy or sorrow, submissive, too, and
sweet;

Though she hasn't any feelings, and but a saw-
dust heart,

She's truer far than any, and many times as
smart;

And she never hurts her friends nor turns upon
her foe;

She never makes complaints wherever she may
go.

She's going to try to help us, and do her little
share.

So Polly Dolly Adaline is going to the Fair.

SISTER MAY, THE NURSE

This brings to favoring notice the good nurse,
"Sister May."

Who offers kindly service to help our Fair to-
day,

She does not tattle gossip from neighboring house
to house,
Nor yet disturbs your slumbers, for she is quiet
as a mouse.
She doesn't spill the broth, if she brings it to
your bed;
She doesn't drop the dishes, nor hurt your aching
head;
She hasn't any of the faults of any nurse you
know,
Although, in all her motions, I can't deny she's
slow.
But her costume's quite correct, her habits clean
and neat;
You know just where to find her, her disposition's
sweet.
She does her little duty all the long and weary
day,
And never tries to shirk her work, this doll,
sweet Sister May.
I can truly recommend her wherever she may go,
We're glad to hear she's doing well, signed her
patron — Mrs. Snow.

CONCERNING PAINLESS CHARITY

MOST of us remember the mythological story of Atlas who was condemned to carry the world on his shoulders. The burden was grievous and Atlas crushed to his knees. He almost went on all fours and his writhing produced the earthquake and his groans the thunder and rumble of the earthquake pains.

Most of us carry our share of this world's load in this fashion. But Elihu Vedder painted a new Atlas, who, brave, strong, and joyous, stood upright and bore his load lightly upon the palms of his uplifted hands, high above his head.

The sight of that picture was an inspiration. If one only could — still one can try, and once uplifted, the load grows lighter, and blessed is he who thus overcomes the world.

We often bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them upon other men's (and women's) shoulders. We can always think of something that "the other fellow" ought to do, which is comparatively harmless except to ourselves. The objectionable part is, that when we really have the assignment of work, or duty, or obligation to others, we exercise so little discrimination in choosing for them. We usually disregard their tastes, opportunities, or qualifications.

One man, who can give money only, is asked to address a meeting, and the born orator is asked for a check. A woman who is an expert housekeeper and mother, with scarce a spare moment to call her own, is besought to write on Hindoo Missions or something of that sort, and

the one who has all that literature at command, and a ready pen besides, is put on a table committee. One who loves embroidery is asked to make a cake for a sale, and the born cook is made a collector and offends many; and so it goes. Why is this?

“’Tis no sin to labor in one’s vocation,” says Falstaff. It seems to me that work well done is just as acceptable if it chances to be that work which is agreeable to the doer, and in which some really good thought is expressed, as that which is not agreeable and involves some special and difficult preparation.

This is the secret of much of the success of our Roman Catholic friends in their enterprises. Each one is assigned to work “in their own vocation.” The matter of penance and self-denial is a simple matter of discipline, intended to test character and endurance. The work they exact is that for which they have a certain gift. It is true that they themselves do not always know what they do best, for Milton valued most highly his political essays, and Bunyan thought no small things of his halting, stupid verses. Besides this, if one’s only talent is also their breadwinner, there is something else to be considered. “Just any little trifle you can throw off in five minutes,” was the modest request made to a man who was paid a guinea a line for his writings. For him it was better to give the guinea.

But, apart from this, it seems unnecessary to make duty so unpleasant, and even to refuse the name of duty to anything we really like to do; whereas, the pleasant duty is quite as important as the unpleasant one. It would serve as well to believe so.

Gifts differ. It is not well to ask some one to address a meeting whose only gift is the making of salads and creams, or to ask a recitation of a singer, or a song from an elocutionist, or to demand of a deaf person that she buy tickets to a sacred concert, and, furthermore, attend it. How pleasant it would be if committees cultivated the great and excellent thing — Painless Charity!

The lack of tact in charitable work (and by that I mean loving work, whether doing or giving) is what makes those who need help so reluctant to accept it. Sometimes they feel that you are doing a (more or less) disagreeable duty by them, or else giving them something you wish to get rid of. If they were once persuaded that you liked to do it they would allow it quickly enough.

When you go around with a wishing cap it will meet with a joyous response, and you find what they really want and not what you think they need. These are those who have real need of Christmas. They will never wish audibly if they do not fully believe in the painless quality of your gifts.

CONCERNING WEDDING GIFTS

“**M**AIDS do not forget their ornaments or brides their attire.” Neither does the affianced maid forget her possible wedding gifts. It is a nice, jolly, friendly custom — as old as the Patriarchs. All the world loves a lover and every one looks kindly on the betrothed pair. God bless them, every one! Everybody feels an impulse to help build their nest, and, in most cases, the well-chosen gifts *do* help the nest-building.

There are places, I forget just where, where wedding gifts are always in money, and are contributed by the wedding guests. These are places where all and everybody's circumstances are well known to everybody, and where the microbe of divorce is unknown, and the dear old phrase, “till death do us part,” is a portion of married life as well as of the marriage ceremony. But I am not discussing divorce or embarrassing questions regarding the ownership or division of wedding gifts.

It requires as much diplomatic talent to be a successful giver of wedding gifts as would suffice for an accredited envoy to St. Petersburg. To give just the right thing, and not the wrong thing; just enough, and not too much or too little to suit the tastes and needs and relationship of both giver and recipient, is the nicest of performances. It means foresight and intimate knowledge of the persons interested.

Mary Wilkins wrote a story of a young couple about to marry, and in circumstances which rendered such wedding gifts as they might receive

of real importance. They happened to be phenomenally unsuitable. Cut-glass finger bowls to a couple who habitually washed their hands at the kitchen sink (and were thankful for the sink, as being better than the pump). A forty-dollar set of chessmen for a couple who rose with the sun and retired with the same, and who went to church on Sundays; elegant sofa pillows and no sofa, etc.

The wise woman of the story, in a fit of desperation, returned the whole lot, explaining the whyness of her action, and checks and more suitable articles were substituted. It is all well enough in a story, but most of those givers in real life would have signed a pledge of total abstinence from wedding presents for the rest of their lives.

In these days of profuse giving and reckless over-crowding of rooms and houses, there should be some concert of action between friends and relatives, and the plans and prospects of the couple to be benefited should be known and respected. If they are not to keep house they do not need sideboards and dining tables and chairs. If they do, they had better choose such things for themselves, for such mistakes are nearly fatal. In fact, the choosing of such things may be the keenest of pleasures to the young folks.

Try to avoid duplication. Mrs. Newlywed once told me that she had sixteen soup ladles among her presents, and added languidly, "and in my house soup is always served behind the screen, in any case." There is no end to the funny stories that one can tell of wedding gifts. The solution of the problem is, as usual, *common sense*. And in case of doubt, *don't!* But if you

can, resolve your doubt, and send a wise and tasteful gift.

Just here is an opportunity to express an opinion of a custom of to-day, for it was not always thus. If one gives a wedding present, it is, or should be, an expression of respect, affection, or regard. In that case one wishes one's gift to be of real benefit to the recipient. The card of the giver goes with it. It is usual to have a record of such gifts in a book, and notes of acknowledgment sent at once. Then the card is promptly suppressed and the gift deposited in the place appointed for all such. Speedily the room assumes the aspect of a curio wareroom. Everything personal is eliminated. For all that appears, many of the articles might have been hired for the occasion, to be promptly returned with thanks and rent money. And, as a matter of fact, in the larger cities, such loans have taken place.

When the gift is from friends of the groom, it may happen that business friends of his wish to testify their esteem and regard for him as a business man. A cardless gift in that case does no good. It may be mentioned to some confidential friend, but it fails of its object. Family gifts mean a good deal this way, too, oftentimes, especially from relatives on the other side. You see, there is a good deal of business mixed up with it, anyhow. If it is very valuable it causes comment, and the comment may as well be correct as otherwise. If it is going to testify good will and confidence, the groom might as well have the credit. His place on the wedding day is often obscure and insignificant. Let him have his chance if it comes.

When expressing this opinion, I have been

answered, "It is to avoid ostentation. Those who give small and insignificant presents would be pained by contrast with richer and more expensive gifts." Don't worry about that. Nobody who ever gave a wedding gift thought it trifling or insignificant. Everybody thinks well of their own gifts and wishes to see them in an honorable place and duly certified. And brides do not often undervalue any of their presents; and when the heart is tender at breaking old ties, and timid over new ones, every evidence of affection and regard is keenly appreciated.

Well, the wedding over, the pair departed, and most of the valuables go to the safety deposit vault, and the hired plate to its owner. The unknown guest, in his well-chosen garments, has had his eye on his employer's property. The bride could not go into court and identify half of the things six months later. There is often a change of circumstances and residence, and there may be no real use for the presents, and they may lie for years in the vault. Some of them may find their way to rummage sales and be identified by the giver — who doesn't forget. I'm told this happened some years ago — actually happened. Therefore, choose well what you send.

It is hoped that no bride will receive one gift the less for this article. It is only hoped that such gifts may be carefully chosen — be suitable and shown with the cards of the givers, as is only proper and respectful.

A few years ago I received from England a newspaper containing a description of a wedding in which I was interested. The bride was one of a family of fourteen children. A list of gifts was published, from the diamond pendant,

the gift of the bridegroom, down to a pin-cushion from one of the little cousins. Nobody was a bit ashamed of what they gave, and it was a lesson in candor at least. Cards are generally, however, not for publication but "as an evidence of good faith," like a newspaper contribution.

Forty and fifty years ago the parents did not give wedding gifts. The trousseau and breakfast was considered to be their share, as indeed it was. It was just as well, for usually the parental purse assisted also in the housekeeping outfit. The wedding gifts were rather expected to come from kin and kind, a little further off than from parents. But it is a good custom on the whole. God bless the young folks, every one and every two!

CHRISTMAS — TWO DIFFERENT LIGHTS

THERE was a time when Christmas was kept as a solemn and holy feast, and yet overflowing with joy and happiness. The joy and levity of men's hearts led them away at times. When the earliest Christian missionaries pleaded the gospel of Christ to the Norse and Scandinavian peoples, finding them keeping the Yule feast with wild excesses and heathen rites, they substituted the feast of the Nativity. It was certainly an improvement upon the character of the festival. But the wild, hot blood of the Norsemen would not down, and drinking and feasting and quarreling went on at the gentle feast of the Nativity as it had done at the previous festivals of Odin and Woden and Thor.

For many, many years this went on. When, in the days of the Reformation, many sects arose all differing from each other, but each looking toward a purer standard of living, with righteousness, temperance, and the humbler virtues as their life models. Among these the Puritans revolted most at the wild revelry of Christmas, the drunkenness, the brutality, and all the excesses that were the practice of the higher classes of the English people. The Protestant element found much to protest against, and this was one of their grievances. If one could not have Christmas without all this riotous living, they would have none of Christmas at all. To them it meant cruelty, oppression, persecution, debauchery, and all that makes for corrupt life and perverted standards. Everything connected with it

was condemned. With the Dutch Protestants, New Year's Day was substituted. In the early settlement of New York by the Dutch there was great respect paid to New Year's Day, with family gatherings and feasting and frolicking, and no quieter or purer than the ancient Christmas. The Scotch Presbyterians, to this day, pay much more respect to New Year's Day than to Christmas. The Puritans of New England would have neither of them, but, as it is a very poor heart that never rejoices in any way, they appointed Thanksgiving Day as a union of an English Christmas, a family reunion, a Harvest Home, and a New Year's — all in one. It is a very recent thing that Christmas has been kept as a general festival or even as a legal holiday.

We owe the discovery of Christmas to Charles Dickens. The Christmas carol set the bells ringing all over Christendom. We feasted with Bob Cratchit on his Christmas goose, we reveled with his children, we made merry at Dingley Dell with the Pickwickians, we shuddered at the sadness and rejoiced with great joy at the ringing of the "Chimes." The Cricket on the Hearth chirped to us, and we rejoiced at the brilliant possibilities of this old and newly restored Christmas. Not but what some of us had gone to church on Christmas Day, to a church full of evergreens and joyful with Christmas songs and chants, and modest gifts were exchanged, a few stockings were hung up, and we all exchanged "Merry Christmas." But the storm of Christmas music that swept through Christendom became a universal anthem at the time of which I speak. Some fifty or perhaps sixty years ago was the beginning of it. Buffalo kept New Year's Day

with heart and soul. Christmas was confined to the children — a very few of them.

Now it is all changed. New Year's Day is a legal holiday, of course, and a few very rich people with very large houses give large receptions. Then every one made New Year's calls, from the little boy in his first boots to the tottering nonegenarian, who might never see another New Year's Day. Ah, well! "Let that pass," as old Ben Rogers used to say.

But Christmas! Now, are we not overdoing the thing almost as much as our ancestors did? Not the "Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men." We cannot get too much of that, even if we get it at all, which, at present dates, we are certainly not doing.

But everything and everybody make gifts. Yes, and the worst of it is that they feel that they must. You value the gift of lover and friend, of kin and kind, but you do not want to feel that it is a result of a compulsory custom and not of a spontaneous impulse of affection and respect or gratitude.

Someone has done a favor, one that cannot be repaid in kind or cash — one makes a Christmas gift.

Someone needs help — one makes a Christmas gift.

Someone wants to do as the others do because it would be mean not to — one makes a Christmas gift.

One's friends are very dear to us, only they have everything — but one makes a Christmas gift.

One loves one's neighbors — and makes a Christmas gift.

One is fond of one's neighbor's child — and makes a Christmas gift.

And so it goes, till it grows into a mighty burden and a great care, and much labor, and perhaps debts, and one's home overflows and one's purse shrinks, and one must keep the gifts and each Christmas brings more (and we would feel dreadfully if it didn't); and we do it, for we feel that we make so many happy by doing so — and perhaps we do. Let us hope that we do.

Still, I do not know if one reaches the full measure of Christmas joy after one is ten years old. We expect gifts that do not come and some come that are not expected or welcome. We do not find that the coal cellar fills up spontaneously, nor — except with a favored few — does the table groan with its culinary burdens. (By the bye, do tables ever groan? I never heard one.) One expects full stockings, loaded Christmas trees, jolly visits, frolics, and tender words and greetings. But if anything is lacking, all is at an end. Your doll is stuffed with sawdust and you want to go into a convent. You have worked so hard to get ready that you are all worn out, and too ill to "share the equal feast."

It seems to the writer that what we all need is not so much to cultivate the habit of giving generously as of receiving graciously. Giving and receiving, considered as a fine art, was once treated by this pen, as long ago as it was only a lead pencil. It is time for a last word from a widely varied experience. Don't say to the one who gives you a choice bit of handiwork, "Ah, you should see what Mrs. So-and-So gave me, so large and so many of them and such exquisite work." This happened once on a time. Nor of a book — "Yes, it is very well, but I prefer works by So-and-So. This writer was never a favorite of mine." How one does wilt under such

a reception! There are a thousand ways of making the giver of a present either happy or wretched by suggesting that the gift should be other than it is.

"I suppose she likes to do it, or she wouldn't do it." Yes, there are some who do like to be generous, thank God! But when a gift is offered, what should be done is to receive it graciously and gratefully, whether it is the thing greatly desired or not. For any gift costs something, and often a great deal. Sometimes money, sometimes taste, sometimes good will, gratitude, affection, and often politeness, sweetness, and all that makes up a gracious character, and it is a tangible expression of many, if not all, of these qualities, and, therefore, worthy of respect and recognition. It is a marvel that the practice of giving continues, in spite of so many failures to appreciate its values. How often is an eagerly solicited subscription left unacknowledged, and the only receipt is the cancelled check at the end of the month. It is a matter of course that So-and-So should be kind and generous. True, but one should not take all that for granted.

One's faults are no more likely to make enemies than one's virtues. One may be without one redeeming fault, and yet have no friends. Louis XIV. had every fault, and most of the vices in the calendar, but he was always gracious and was much beloved. So it was with Charles II., having every fault and yet many friends were won by his courtesy. I once gave a gift to a little boy. "Thank the lady," said the mother. "Not until I see what it is," said he; "maybe I won't thank her at all when I open it." Suppose he didn't like it. I hope he will be more polite when he is older.

Just a word more. Just a hint on choosing. It is good to give things that are needed, but it is good sometimes to give pretty, useless, and comforting things. It depends; but both are good. One must know the person and their character very well to give wearing apparel or ornaments. Don't give paintings, embroidery, or such things to one who excels in those arts, (or thinks that she does,) or ornaments and jewels to the rich, or books to a student in his own line of work. If you give a pair of shoes to a child, give also a toy or a sweet. You may share your delicacies, and lend your books, but don't give away gifts unless for excellent reason. You wouldn't like to see your own gifts given away. Ribbons open up a wide field of generosity, especially hair ribbons, etc. Children all like books of adventure, and fine handkerchiefs wipe tears from many eyes. Consider spaces in which they will be used, in choosing bulky articles. Never choose a hat, a bonnet, a picture, or a lover for another. So shalt thou escape trouble.

Don't give "things with a string to them" and conditions. It is so good to own things completely. Consider also the other side, and if money is given, don't divert it from its purpose without permission. It is said that it is more blessed to give than to receive. If that is true, better let "the other fellow take his chance at a blessing." Don't be too greedy of blessings, but accept politely and kindly. Remember, also, that gifts and generosity must be paid for. It isn't pleasant to think that your friend incurred awkward debts to be generous to you. January is notoriously a bad month to collect debts.

After all is over and the parcels gone, and the last box of candy provided, and the Christmas

cakes for breakfast, in come requests and claims for all sorts of "unconsidered trifles." There are huge charities and church festivals, and trees, and the workmen expect something and ought to have it, and if one goes in for all sorts of things, there is certain to be debt and inconvenience that the finest self-denial will hardly meet and satisfy. So consider well. The little strange boys who perpetually ring your bell and wish you a Merry Christmas are just little beggars. If you give to them, it is only to beggars — and should be so understood. It is different when they are your own dear little friends.

When one chooses a gift one should pray for wisdom, love, and discretion; and when accepting, for sweetness and grace. How gracious was Christ's acceptance of the costly box of ointment! How sweetly did he rebuke the niggardly spirit which suggested that it be sold for an hundred pence and given to the poor! Let the gift be worthy of both giver and receiver — and let the acceptance alike be worthy of both.

There was once a Little Old Lady, but she did not know that she was either little or old. She planned a Christmas party. She was to have a party of ten in all, and they were too old for either Christmas stockings or Christmas trees. So it was all quite different for them. All the gifts intended for the Little Old Lady herself had been opened by her quite early on Christmas morning, and her pleasure and her tears were enjoyed, quite by herself, at that time. Then all the people in her house, her house family, all had their gifts, and some of her poor and blameless friends outside had also been remembered, for she was fond of good people, rich and poor. The younger folks went to church, but the Little

Old Lady was very busy at home, and her heart sang Christmas carols all day. The parlor, which was also the library, was hung with greens and with holly berries, and at six o'clock the dinner was ready and ten beloveds sat down to the table, and they ate the soup and turkey, and the pudding and mince pies, and the ice cream and coffee, and lots of candy, and were satisfied, and went back into the parlor. There was an alcove where the bookcases stood, and a high screen shut it off from the room. Most of the guests sat down to wait developments. There was a great jangling of sleigh bells and the two smiling maids carried away the screen. There sat the village postmistress beside a pile of stuff, and on a little table was a teapot and cup and saucer. The bells jangled again and she exclaimed, "There's Santa Claus now. I knew he wouldn't be late." Santa Claus, in a fur cap and cape, came in. It was the Little Old Lady herself with a bag of letters. The Post-office Mistress said, "As so many letters were published in books nowadays there couldn't be any harm in just reading these." So, while the Post-office Mistress sorted the letters, Santa Claus took off the cover to the heap of things, and we all saw a steamer trunk marked "Wanted," and lots of parcels. The Post-office Mistress wore a pretty cap and kerchief, and opened and read the letters and the addresses aloud. They were all in some sort of verses, some funny, all jolly, and were not poetry, only jingles, and suited each person and the gifts which Santa Claus presented to the person. It made a good deal of fun, as each one opened his or her gift, and threw the wrappers behind the sofas, and every one saw all the others. Last of all, the bells and the trunk

were presented to the young man of the house, and afterwards his horse wore the bells, and the young man went over the sea with his trunk. The postmistress read beautifully, and the verses sounded almost like poetry, some of them. Afterwards all had some more ice cream and went home, except the house family. Everybody liked their presents, and if they didn't, the Little Old Lady never suspected it, not even that she was little and old herself.

A POST-CHRISTMAS WORD

IT is said by them of the New Notions:

“Do your shopping for Christmas early (before December 15th).”

“Go early in the day and avoid the lunch hours of the shop people.”

“Carry home your own parcels, if possible.”

“Remember and make something for Christmas each month in the year, and avoid hurry at the end of the year.”

And a good deal more to the same effect.

Christmas is now past, and its yearly lesson is with us. We have given and received. We have enjoyed, and possibly suffered, and let us hope that we live more and more wisely as each Christmas passes to its account.

Ever since I found out the sweet falsehood of Santa Claus, and knew that Christmas giving was something that I, too, although a child, might share, I have been a Christmas giver, and for many years a Christmas buyer as well. Year by year I learned many things about these matters, pleasant and otherwise. The sweetness remains, but sometimes the wisdom is bitter in the mouth.

“Beginning early” is not always possible, for comparatively few of us get our Christmas money together much before that date. We are sometimes delayed even in getting together materials for Christmas work. Besides being impossible, sometimes for the reason it is undesirable. Conditions may change in the course of the months that may make our choice premature and injudicious, such as finding out about the taste,

preferences, conditions, wishes, etc., of the receivers.

And, then, it is not possible sometimes, because the shops and goods are not ready. They do not receive their goods much before December, nor do they display them to an undecided public. One would think that they would, but they do not. I don't know why. Sometimes only samples are shown, and "they will send for it for you," and it does not always arrive in season, and sometimes mistakes are made and changes necessary. Perhaps it is long after New Year's before it arrives. And what do you get for your promptness but vexation of spirit?

"Try to make some one thing for Christmas gifts every month of the year."

It seems to the observer that each month in the year has enough of its own special cares to load the Marthas of to-day to their utmost endurance.

January is the month of settlements, of endings and of beginnings, and of social cares and enjoyments, of the holiday season itself, and of getting over it.

February is the month of forecasting, of sewing, of club studies, of linen buying and making, of winter journeys.

March, of the same subject continued, with forecasts of changes, of repairs, of house cleaning, of planning for the future, often of sickness and nursing.

April, of dressmaking, shopping, of busy household planning and working, of gardening, of busy Easter vacations, of the going to and fro of many young folks.

May brings moving and flitting, of prepara-

tions for weddings, for summer travels and country life, of gardening, etc.

June brings many cares. There are sure to be guests, weddings, graduations, and commencements, and college boys and girls coming and going.

July is a month of travel, of entertainment, of household packing and unpacking.

August may bring a little rest and leisure, quietness, veranda days, pleasant reading, and inevitable heat, and if within the zone of the automobile, every hour of leisure is preëmpted most delightfully and absorbingly. And who wants to do fancy work nowadays, anyhow?

September is full of cares; coming back to town, dressmaking for school children and collegians, cleaning of houses filled with summer dust and use or disuse, and of getting the youngsters to school.

October is the month of débutantes and of entertaining, often of weddings and betrothals of brides, guests, and travelers.

And November is like unto it but even more so, while, through the whole year is the steady undertone of

“Three meals a day, three meals a day,
Hours for work and hours for play.

Family, neighbors and churches and clubs,
Cooking and sewing and ironing and tubs.

Where is the leisure for extras, I pray?”

Besides, suppose it is done months before, and then suppose some of hundreds of possible accidents and changes, even illness and death, make your work and choice totally unsuitable, and you have to do it all over again? What profiteth it?

Suppose some wise forehanded person should

decide that it would be a great saving of time to begin harvest in June, so as to get all through before the heat of summer came on? Or to make maple sugar in October, because it is so nice to have it fresh for winter pancakes?

After all, there is really no time for seed time and harvest unless in the time of seed time and harvest, except for the hothouse system, which does not work in all cases. You cannot do it, you know.

Early in December one begins to feel Christmas in the air, and such parcels as have far to travel must start early. But you cannot really make up your mind what John and Mary and Martha wish for before the fifteenth of December. By that time, one can smell the evergreens, the spruce and cedar and hemlock, and the cake or the candy, and the fresh paint on the toys and the straw of the packing. By then, and not much before, the goods are displayed, and you have your Christmas money and plan where you can hide some of the things. (By the bye, how do the dwellers in flats manage with the big mechanical toys, tricycles, etc., unless all the family are blind?)

By then the new girls and boys have a little time to learn a little of their business, and to discover that their business is to sell and show goods and not to talk of "seeing Charley last night." By that time the children and the elders have worn their wishing-caps and have stopped buying things for themselves. Crowded? Why, *of course!* But it is a jolly, kindly crowd, and you know that you like it. It is the time o' year when the grand folks get out to buy things, and the bewildered men and the worried mammas and the big-eyed children and the sly aunts and

cousins dodge each other more or less successfully. What fun it is!

Of course, the clerks do get tired. It must be so, for all must work in harvest time, and for some it is the only chance either for work or harvest. And I heard only a short time ago that the "early birds" having got through shopping and having carried home their things, many bundle-boys are not hired and many girls are "not required," and thereby some money is saved to the dealers, and just so many disappointed young folks who wished to earn a little extra and help out at home. It is inevitable that one is very tired in harvest time. But one cannot do without harvest time.

And if it is too much — *don't do too much!* One generally does too much and one is sure to forget some dear or needy friend. If it is so, one can always make or give an "un-Christmas" present, or Easter, or birthday, or — just a present.

When the cold, sharp days and the keen, bright nights of December are upon us, and the thoughts of home and love and children, and the tender cares of the old, and the sweet needs of the young children, and the lacks of the poor all appeal to us, and the mirth of the young and the wishes of every one fill our hearts with love and our hands with cares, *then* is the time to stir about the shopping and the Christmas work, even if some of it does get crowded out. It is better not to dilute the Christmas feeling to its highest attenuation by spreading it over many months and weeks beforehand, and demanding months and weeks of rest afterwards.

Everything in its due season!

THE JOY OF LIFE

SINCE the discovery of the pure joy of living and since the disappearance of the gloomy and sentimental school of literature — Byron, Bulwer, Hemans, Balzac, and others of a similar point of view — and since the brevity of life and its real work, grief, trials, and suffering have been found capable of amelioration, existence has been a different thing altogether and has borne a different color. The sentimental miss with her pose of chronic sadness and sentiment, with her moon-gazing and melancholy quotations of depressing thought is gone, and is as if she had never been. The man who did not find this world going his way and cried out, “I have not loved the world nor the world loved me,” has also passed away nowadays; he *makes* it go his way, and if he cannot, he accepts the other way and has learned not to make a nuisance of himself with his wailings over his sad fate.

It takes time to learn to bear it thus, but it has been learned, and it can be learned, and the world is far better, wiser, and happier for being thus lightly borne.

In former days the brevity of life, its sadness and uncertainties, the darker side of religion, the hardships and privations of ill-fortune, “when friends desert and foes prevail,” were often and disastrously dwelt upon.

In America there were many material obstacles with which to contend — a hard soil, a stern climate, savage foes, scanty means, aspiring souls — exacting principles, and consciences

with lofty ideals, kept nerve and soul under continual strain, and whip and spur all of the time. Many were those of the brightest and best who —

“ By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life.”

Often, even by loving friends, cheerfulness was called levity; patience, indolence; and seriousness and earnestness became the first duty of life. It is not to be wondered that these sad-colored views prevailed.

There was great reserve, and reticence oftentimes, and no one knew the soul-trials of near friends. There was sharp economy, but little real poverty, and if there were, nobody owned to it.

In time (what a blessed thing time is, by the bye) the earth yielded her increase. But it did not increase enough to support its numerous and energetic family.

The rocky hills and stony pastures of New England sent forth sturdy sons and industrious daughters to till the more fruitful fields of the West — farther West — the far West — the uttermost parts of the earth.

In the clear sunshine and among the golden grainfields things began to look more cheerful. All sorts of opportunities began to offer themselves, especially those of travel, and while the fascinations of the older world of civilization held fast to some, and gave to all a wider vision, the comforts of life, the freedom, the opportunities, the loves and friendships, the freedom and the liberty (they are not the same thing, although they seem so), the respect and tenderness of men to women, the comradeship and simplicity of the love of women to men, gradually

changed the face of everything and drew us back home again with irresistible power.

We had so much here at home, and it was all so good, that we could and did share it with the hordes and troops of emigrants who came and made themselves of us. We learned to play and not to forsake work, and the emigrants worked, and in time learned to play also.

Within the last twenty or thirty years people discovered that, although the farm work is just as important, it is not quite as hard. Learning is quite as difficult but not as difficult to obtain. They find that the city is not altogether peopled by "airy nothings" and supercilious weaklings, overdressed and ignorant men and women, and that the country is not full of ignorant and overworked men and women, and that it is not entirely the sole object of life to overreach each other in both and all classes.

Schools do not always demoralize the young, even boarding schools, and visits of the city and country mice are not always disastrous. That a reasonable ambition and desire for fresh house paint and muslin curtains does not always lead to the poorhouse, and that hints and patterns help to inform one for a better and brighter outlook for clothes, table, and daily life. That it is sometimes a good thing to go into the country, not as troublesome and exacting guests, but as well-paying and well-treated summer boarders, thus bringing the more strenuous, if more interesting, life of the city in contact with the more simple and hard-working life of the country, to the profit and benefit of both.

From these needs and beginnings came the summer boarder, the one crop of the country not dependent on climate, weather, or

soil, and which fails not in any season, wet or dry.

In the older time, when the summer host was rare and difficult, and the summer guest frequent and objectionable, such children as had no rural aunt or grandmother staid in the city through the hot summer, and a good many of them were gone before autumn. The country folk toiled hard to make ends meet, and they did not always meet, and mortgages and all sorts of distressing things prevailed. They did not want city folks bothering around, wanting horses to drive about in haying and harvesting, bringing weeds and litter into the house and putting all sorts of foolish notions into the young folks' heads.

But in time the square peg found the square hole, and square conduct on both sides helped things. The young folks exchanged books and patterns, worked and played together, to the advantage of both. The idea of overreaching on both sides yielded to mutual respect and good will. Sometimes there were marriages, but that was a by-product, and not the primary object of the experiment.

And so in time there grew up a great love for the beautiful green world, so new and strange to the "denizens of the pent city mart," which had only been, hitherto, regarded in an agricultural light. Also, opportunities from the city's culture and privileges came to the country mouse. Of course, there were sometimes ill-effects, morbid desires and disappointments, misplaced attachments, and wrecked lives. But these things happen in all situations and conditions, and will do so while human nature is imperfect.

With the use of certain machines the drudgery

of the farm was diminished, and although more and better work was done, much of it was easier. Magazines and papers came in and opinions of the world's topics began to seek a level in both town and country. Rural delivery, telegraph, telephone, trolley roads, bicycles, and, last of all, automobiles and good roads extended the work of a better acquaintance, and of peace and good will between the different parts of the country.

It has gone so far, and summer boarders are so numerous, that country homes are springing up all over the country and waste places blossom like the rose. One does not consider the soil as much as the air, nor insist upon vegetable gardens as much as play-grounds for rosy children — not huge palaces of wealth and gaiety, but honest, simple, healthful country homes. If not by the seashore, where the nabobs have preëmpted every stretch of beach or lift of rock or mountain, (and shame to them for doing it,) by some pretty stream or lake or pond, or some neat and pleasant village where the young ones can play in sun or shade, feed chickens, and hunt eggs.

(Speaking of eggs, who would have thought of the barely tolerated hen taking such a place in the social scheme? Foolish and despised Biddycut has paid off many a mortgage, and in some States the interest on the State debt. Fact! So say Kansas statistics. And no fricassees are like country fricassees, and no eggs like those brought in, pink and warm, in a little boy's hat for the breakfast table.)

There are places where children can play in sand and have real play-houses under trees, and wade in brooks and grow brown and rosy, spite

of mosquitoes, ivy, and all ills to which country flesh is subject.

City life, too, has so greatly changed, and for the better. While club life is easily overdone, and is very bad if it is, there are so many kinds of clubs, and so many ways of using them, that on the whole it is an excellent thing. That is, for the large majority, whom, I maintain, are composed mostly of sensible folks, and of those who, more or less wisely, live up to their privileges.

One may not personally care for tea (I do not very much, myself), especially in daily and unlimited quantities. But the tea of social life, where friend meets friend and acquaintances, and exchange a kindly greeting, is, on the whole, an excellent thing. It costs little, either trouble or expense. Any one can do it, and the quality of the gossip held over the teacups is constantly modified and sweetened by the imperceptible percolation of Christian feeling.

There was a time when a great and good man prayed, "Oh, Lord! avenge me of mine enemies!" Men do not pray that way nowadays, even if they sometimes feel that way. If the thought of "getting even" with an injury occurs to them, then the thought of the endless chain of misery, like a mountaineer's feud or vendetta, comes to mind and the unworthy thought is abandoned. In fact, "it isn't done," and the practical wisdom, the hard, everyday, practical force of the Golden Rule becomes as evident as its Divine Sweetness.

Not long ago I was told of a dinner party given by a newcomer to a small town, where, of the ten guests, three were not on speaking terms. "Now, what would you do?"

If I knew it, I would not seat them side by side. But if I did not know it, and did invite them, they would be the better for meeting, and seeing more of each other, and thereby getting over their enmities. Of course, if one *knew* all about it, it would be foolish to risk spoiling your little dinner by forcing together such discordant elements, but it is best not to be looking out for such conditions. Life is too short not to live up to all one's privileges.

There are many old fashions that are "more honored in the breach than in the observance." A stock piece of good advice often given by them of old time, when their young folks went forth to school or business in another place, was this: "A few well-chosen friends." Good, as far as it goes. But how are you going to choose your friends? Who ever really did choose friends? You will have a chance to make acquaintances, doubtless, and perhaps to make selections from them of some you prefer. You make them or not by proximity or distance, and you cannot overcome that, at least at first. Make all the friends you can (there will not be too many, for they are watching you, too, as well) and with prudent reserve at first to all. As time goes on, friend after friend departs. They must, and if you have not a good many, so much the worse for you. Especially as you grow in years, seek friends — many of them — with younger folks.

The younger people of to-day are very sweet and tender to the older people. That is one of the joys of living in this cycle. The worst of it is, that it may develop the habit of longevity to an alarming extent, and just when the habit is established the fashion may change.

But the jolly country homes, with all sorts of

nice people coming and going, and some of them staying, are good places for old and young both. And the afternoon tea, with just a friendly hand-touch and a few kindly words — frivolous, perhaps, but kindly — possibly epigrammatic, is good. Conversation does not mean long, preachy, teachy, talky discourses. One must learn to condense, as in a telegram, “in ten words,” or a telephone. “Boil it down,” says the wise “Autocrat of the Breakfast Table,” “whether it is conversation, MSS., or greens.” And when you go home you will remember these brief, bright words and messages, and thank goodness that bores are out of fashion. And “heart to heart talks” take too much vitality, and develop too much egotism and self-consciousness.

And there’s another old notion exploded. “Never forget yourself in company.”

But *do*, by all means, forget yourself. You can enjoy your own company at any time. Now is your chance to get new ideas, see new objects, obtain new impressions. You may even acquire a bit of wisdom, if on the lookout for it. One does not, nowadays, go out in best clothes with a card case for calls. It ends with cards, if you do. But in a kindly, joyous, friendly crowd you get the sweetness of many visits. You move about, you see those you seldom see, you see your familiar friend, you need not stay long with any one, acceptable or otherwise; you need not shake them off, for they do not expect to remain long with you. You cannot overeat on tea and cakes. Others come and go; plans can be laid for other meetings.

Long live the afternoon tea! for it is a picture whose perspective constantly changes, and for

which summer sun shines and winter fires blaze
— where Easter flowers bloom, and spruce tree
and pine tree and cedar, together, welcome
friends at Christmas time for a kind word and
a cup of tea.

INDIAN SUMMER

IT is not nearly night —
Although the shadows lengthen,
Although the cool winds strengthen,
The western sun shines bright.

There has been frost, 'tis true;
Red leaves cling to the tree —
The wind blows fresh and free,
And sunny days grow few.

Bright curves the new moon's ray,
The planets burn like lamps —
Or fires in hunters' camps —
No night, 'tis but the close of day.

Fall odors fill the air,
'Tis ripeness, not decay;
An Indian Summer day,
'Tis bright and cool, but very still and fair.

How fair the sky!
How fresh the evening breeze
Sings through the naked trees!
No earthly sound nor cry!

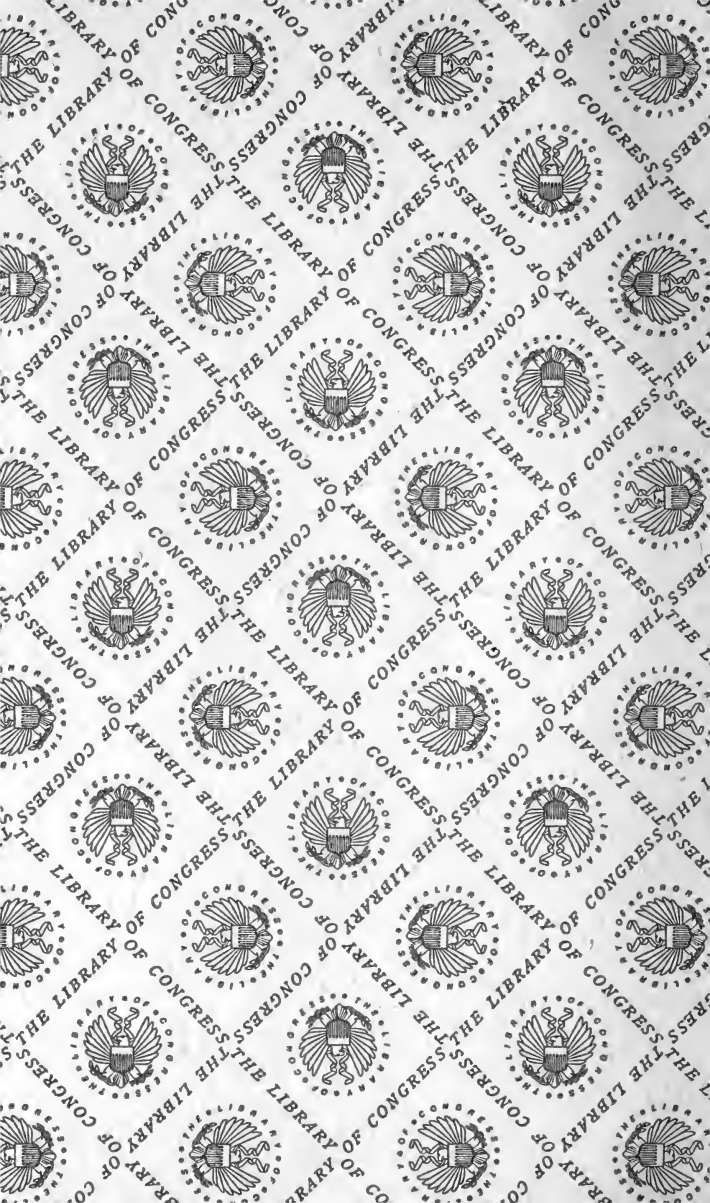
The hour of rest draws near,
The time of blessed rest
(Of earthly things the best)
Falls through the evening clear.

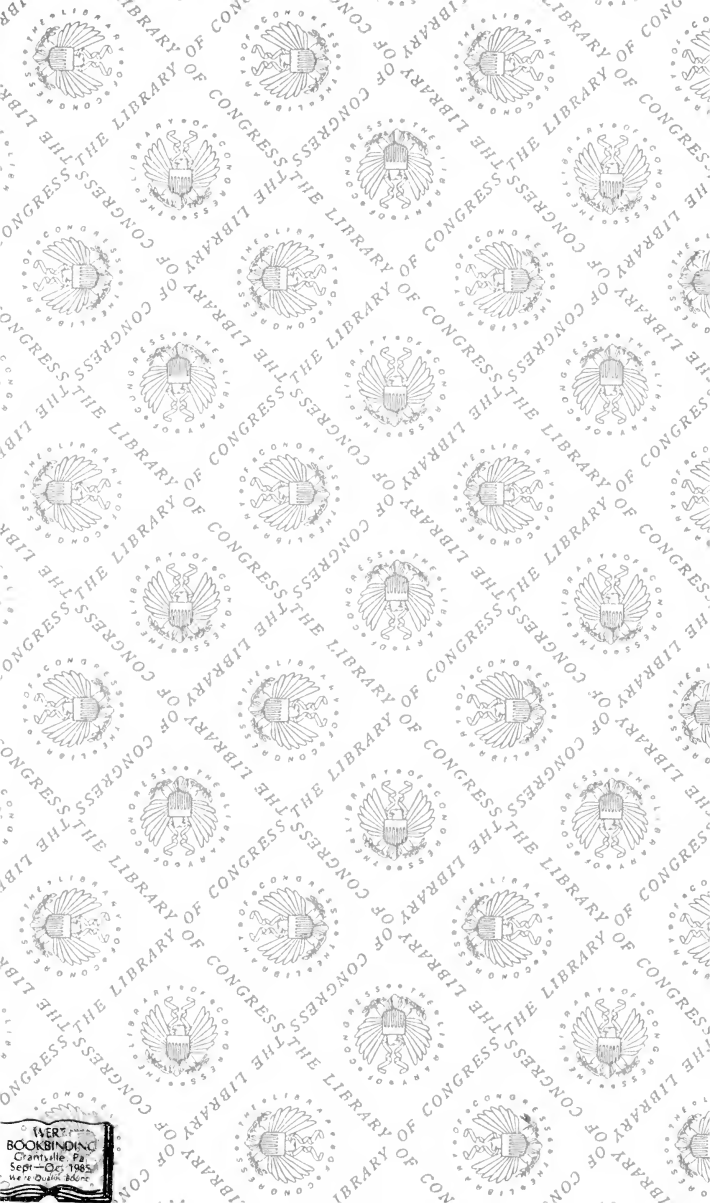
The day was very long,
Sometimes the load was sore
That wearily we bore —
But like a Sabbath song,

Sweet as a brooding dove,
Through evening cool and calm,
Comes sleep like Sabbath Psalm,
Peace in her hands, and love.

“He gave to His beloved sleep,”
It was not dreary night,
And in the east shines bright
The sun of holy hope, across the deep.







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